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The Representations of Hercules and Hydra in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*

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## Abstract

This thesis relates *Coriolanus* to traditions of Renaissance and Reformation thinking on Hercules and Hydra, which had acquired new connotations in the age after neglect during the Middle Ages; and this study investigates the play's engagement with that material and more precisely its active relationships to texts and ideas at present under-represented in its critical reception and especially by Shakespearean critics. *Coriolanus* highlights the conflict between the patricians including heroic Coriolanus and the plebeians, and Coriolanus describes the plebeians as "the many-headed multitude" like "Hydra" (2.3.16-17; 3.1.96). Coriolanus is compared to Hercules (4.6.104), and battle between Hercules and the many-headed Hydra is suggested in the play. If Hydra symbolises subjects, likewise Hercules stands for rulers. In short, the closer examination of Hercules and Hydra leads us to a deeper understanding of Shakespeare's presentation of rulers and subjects. In the Introduction, a preliminary analysis of *Coriolanus* will elucidate the significance of the mythical hero and monster. Chapter 1 will discuss the roots of the phrase "many-headed multitude" in *Coriolanus*: it is a reflection, in complex form, of the really existing social instability in late Tudor and early Stuart England, which experienced many rebellions and famines; and it is in the tradition of Renaissance Humanism. Building on this material, Chapter 2 explores the way some European monarchs compared themselves to Hercules. The next two chapters analyse Herculean "eloquence" and "virtue," which are quintessentially Humanistic terms, and they trace the use of the "eloquent" and

“virtuous” Hercules as a model for European monarchs in the Renaissance. Finally, we study Hydra as a symbol of “the flexibility of the self” in the Humanistic tradition. This study employs the methodology of the iconology of the Warburg School and the history of ideas, referring to Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Holbein’s engravings, and Alciato’s emblem books, etc.



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## Translation, Transcription, and Citation of Early Modern Sources

When I use translations of early modern texts, such as Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and Montaigne's *Essays*, I use the early modern English translations. Although editorial conventions vary widely in early modern Europe, I have tried to maintain original spelling when quoting from primary and related sources. But in order to facilitate the reading of the thesis, I have adapted the spelling in the following cases:

- the long / f / has been replaced with / s /.
- contractions have been expanded, such as "cõ" to "con" or "com."
- early modern uses of / u /, / v /, / i /, and / j / have been regularised to reflect their contemporary use and phonetic value.
- any other additions or alterations to orthography are included in square brackets.

## Introduction

This is a study of the significance of two intertwined classical figures, Hercules and Hydra, in the European Renaissance (roughly 1300 to 1620), a period in which they acquired new connotations after neglect during the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup> This thesis explores the importance of representations of Hercules and Hydra in Shakespeare's works, especially *Coriolanus*, not only to deepen understanding of those works, but also, by drawing on Shakespeare's particular engagements with these two figures, to illuminate the wider significance of Hercules and Hydra in the European Renaissance. The significance of Hercules and Hydra has not hitherto been explored by critics of Shakespeare. The reason for my focus on Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* is that we can uncover Humanistic factors, which are crucial components in the play, by looking through the lens of the Hercules-Hydra representations.

The aim of this thesis is not a comprehensive study of Hercules or Hydra but a limited study of the connection between Hercules and Hydra. There are some studies on either Hercules or Hydra, but it is difficult to find studies focusing upon the combination. The disadvantage of this is seen in, for instance, Eugene M. Waith's *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare, and Dryden* in 1962.<sup>2</sup> He discusses Herculean heroes in late Tudor and early Stuart England, but his twenty two pages on the Herculean *Coriolanus* fail to provide a deep insight into the play. He says, "Pride and anger. . . are among the distinguishing characteristics of the Herculean hero; without them he would not

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<sup>1</sup> Some scholars write "the Hydra," but others use only "Hydra" in their critical works. In this thesis we use "Hydra" because Shakespeare used "Hydra" without "the" in his works.

<sup>2</sup> Eugene M. Waith, *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare, and Dryden* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962).

be what he is”; and “Coriolanus is given Herculean strength.”<sup>3</sup> It is true that “pride,” “anger,” and “strength” are Herculean characteristics, but Waith’s consideration is too commonplace and undynamic because of the role he assumes for such stories in Renaissance culture. In addition, he disregards representations of Hydra as an enemy to Hercules in the play.

The shallowness of Waith’s discussion can be attributed to disregard for Hercules-Hydra representations in the interconnected European intellectual tradition or the Humanistic tradition. His book was written in 1962, but detailed and meticulous research on Shakespeare’s usage of Hercules and Hydra has not been carried out since then.<sup>4</sup> There is much room for further study in this area, and it promises to be a valuable contribution to Shakespearean and other criticism. The problem of Hercules-Hydra representations sounds trivial, but we will realise after the investigation that this idea is incorrect.

Before the investigation of the Hercules-Hydra representations, the identities of the two mythical figures in ancient Greek stories should be clarified. Hercules is a hero with unrivalled physical strength; Hydra is known as a monster in Greek mythology, and the slaying of Hydra is one of the twelve “Labours of Hercules.” Hydra lived in the swamp at Lerna situated on the western side of the Argolic Gulf in southern Greece, and had nine heads, of which the middle one was immortal (Figs. 0.1 and 0.2).

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<sup>3</sup> Waith 122, 125.

<sup>4</sup> For other classical and Renaissance influences except Hercules and Hydra on *Coriolanus*, see John W. Velz, “Cracking Strong Curbs Asunder: Roman Destiny and the Roman Hero in *Coriolanus*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 13.1 (1983) 58-69; Anne Barton, “Livy, Machiavelli and Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Survey* 38 (1985) 115-29; Geoffrey Miles, “‘I Play the Man I Am’: *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare and the Constant Romans*, Oxford English Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 149-68; Chikako D. Kumamoto, “Shakespeare’s Achillean Coriolanus and Heraean Volumnia: Textual Contamination and Crossing of Homer’s *Iliad* in *Coriolanus*,” *Journal of the Wooden O Symposium* 7 (2007) 51-64. These approaches examine *Coriolanus* by focusing upon the influences of Virgil (Velz) and Livy and Machiavelli (Barton), the Stoic constancy in Coriolanus (Miles), and the Greek warrior Achilles’ wrath in Coriolanus (Kumamoto). However, recent criticism of the play has overlooked the profound Renaissance implications of the classical Hercules-Hydra representations in Shakespeare’s Roman tragedy *Coriolanus*.



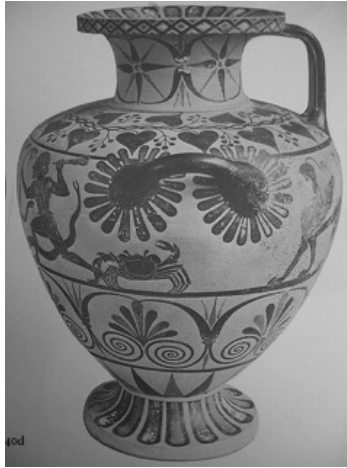


Fig. 0.1.



Fig. 0.2.

Figs. 0.1 and 0.2. “Caeretan’ Black-Figure Hydria,” the Collection of Count Antoine Seilern, the Second Half of 6th Century BC.<sup>5</sup>

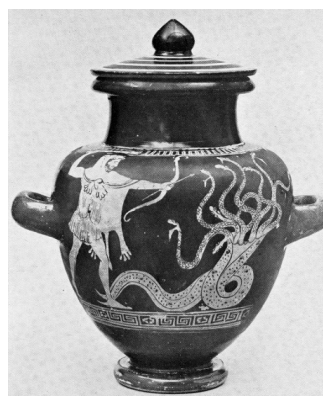


Fig. 0.3

“Lernean Hydra,” by the Geras Painter, 480 BC-470 BC.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Martin Robertson, *A History of Greek Art*, 2 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975) 139, plates 40d and 42a. The Warburg Institute Photographic Collection also has this photograph.

<sup>6</sup> By the courtesy of the Warburg Institute Photographic Collection.

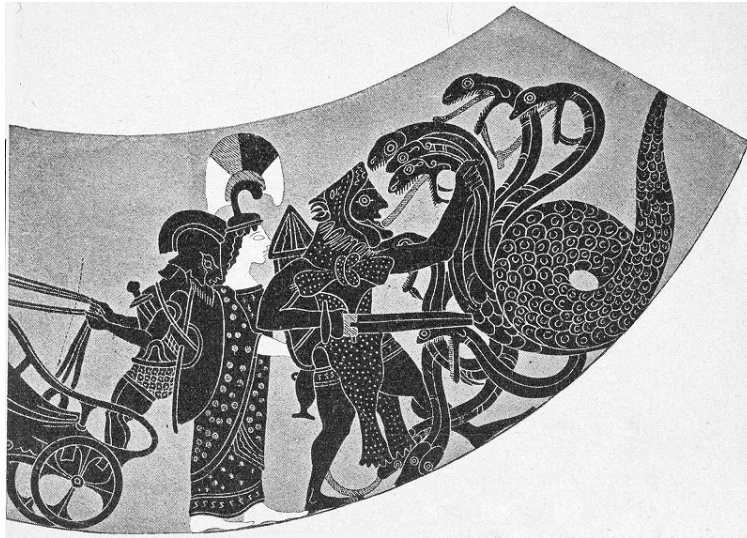


Fig. 0.4

“Lernean Hydra,” by an Unknown Greek Artist, 6th Century BC.<sup>7</sup>

Hercules struck off its heads with his club, but as each head was knocked off, two new ones grew in its place.<sup>8</sup> One of the texts in which most Renaissance readers would have encountered Hercules and Hydra was Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* as translated by Arthur Golding in 1567, and Shakespeare could have read it at his grammar school.<sup>9</sup> Hercules

<sup>7</sup> By the courtesy of the Warburg Institute Photographic Collection. See also, Hans Christoph Ackermann, Jean-Robert Gisler and Lilly Kahil, eds., *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae* (Zürich: Artemis Verlag, 1981-2009).

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Jennings Rose, *Gods and Heroes of the Greeks* (London: Methuen, 1957) 108-09; Marjorie Susan Venit, “Herakles and the Hydra in Athens in the First Half of the Sixth Century B. C.,” *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 58.1 (1989) 99-113; Jane Davidson Reid and Chris Rohmann, *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts, 1300-1990s*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 553-54; Mary Beard, “Le Mythe (grec) à Rome: Hercule aux bains,” *Mythes grecs au figuré: De l’Antiquité au baroque*, eds. Stella Georgoudi and Jean Pierre Vernant, Temps des images (Paris: Gallimard, 1996) 81-104; Alastair Blanshard, *Hercules: A Heroic Life* (London: Granta, 2005) 77-79; Daniel Ogden, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 26-33; Daniel Ogden, *Dragons, Serpents, and Slayers in the Classical and Early Christian Worlds: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) 50-56.

<sup>9</sup> For example, “Ovid, *Metamorphoses, Fasti*” was in a list of reading materials for a syllabus in Ipswich School (1523); Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 13. For Ovidian influence on Shakespeare and his classical education, see Thomas Whitfield Baldwin, *William Shakspeare’s Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, 2 vols. (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2005) 2.436-41, 2.456-59, 2.516-21; Stuart Gillespie, *Shakespeare’s Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare Sources*, Student Shakespeare Library (London: Continuum, 2004) 259-68, 390-403, 495-506; H. R. D. Anders, *Shakespeare’s Books: A Dissertation on Shakespeare’s Reading and the Immediate Sources of His Works* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1904) 21-31; Charles Martindale and A. B. Taylor, *Shakespeare and the Classics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004) 33-85. Baldwin comments on Shakespeare’s usage of the Golding’s translation: “I believe it is clear, therefore,

derisively speaks to Achelous, a river god, who is fighting against Hercules by changing himself to a snake:

It is my Cradle game  
To vanquish snakes, O Acheloy. Admit thou overcame  
All other Snakes, yet what art thou compared to the Snake  
Of Lerna, who by cutting off did still encrease take?  
For of a hundred heades not one so soone was paarde away,  
But that uppon the stump therof there budded other tway.  
This sprouting Snake whose braunching heads by slaughter did revive  
And grow by cropping, I subdewd, and made it could not thryve.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, Ovid gives a description of Hydra as follows: “the oughly Snake / Of Lerna, who by losse did grow and dooble force still take.”<sup>11</sup> Shakespeare assuredly knew Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* because he cited it in *Titus Andronicus*:

TITUS. Lucius, what book is that she [Lavinia] tosseth so?  
YOUNG LUCIUS. Grandshire, ’tis Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.  
My mother gave it me. (4.1.41-43)<sup>12</sup>

Shakespeare may have read other classical sources for Hercules and Hydra besides Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, such as Virgil’s *Aeneid* (7.658; 8.300) and Horace’s *Epistles* (2.1.10).<sup>13</sup>

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that Shakspeare knew *Metamorphoses* in the original. But it is equally clear that upon occasion he used Golding alone or with the original” (2.436).

<sup>10</sup> Ovid, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) 9.79-86.

<sup>11</sup> Ovid 9.236-37

<sup>12</sup> All quotations from Shakespeare are taken from Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, eds., *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999-2000); Horace, *Epistles*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, *Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica*, rev. ed., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1929). Scholars have not definitively ascertained whether Shakespeare knew the treatments of Hercules and Hydra by the following authors: Hesiod, *The Theogony*, trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *Hesiod; The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954) 313-15; Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, trans. F. Storr, *Sophocles; Ajax, Electra, Trachiniae, Philoctetes*, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951) 574, 714; Euripides, *Heracles*, trans. David Kovacs, *Euripides; Suppliant Women, Electra, Heracles*, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) 419-21; Diodorus Siculus, *Diodorus of Sicily*, trans. C. H. Oldfather, Charles Lawton Sherman, C. Bradford Welles, Russel M. Geer and Francis R. Walton, The Loeb Classical Library, 12 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933-67) 4.2.5; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod, The Loeb Classical Library, 5 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1918-35) 2.37.4, 5.10.9, 5.17.11, 5.26.7, 10.18.6; Hyginus, *Apollodorus’ Library and Hyginus’ Fabulae: Two Handbooks of Greek Mythology*,

However, in general, Ovid was the most influential in Shakespeare's writing. This influence, for example, is clearly shown by the play-within-a-play performed by the Mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which has been "regarded by many scholars as Shakespeare's most Ovidian" work.<sup>14</sup> As Jonathan Bate puts it, "Ovid was Shakespeare's favorite classical poet."<sup>15</sup> Raphael Lyne also stresses the Ovidian influence on Elizabethan education: "A text like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* played many roles in the Elizabethan reader's life: it had a prominent role in education, it fed into popular vernacular literature of the period, and it had accumulated a wide variety of interpretative possibilities—a source of moral teaching, science, religion, and exemplary poetic performance."<sup>16</sup>

How did these two figures inhabit Shakespeare's and audiences' imagined worlds? Shakespeare uses the words, "Hercules," "Herculean," and "Alcides (another name of Hercules)," forty four times, and the word "Hydra" five times in total in all his works.<sup>17</sup>

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trans. R. Scott Smith and Stephen Trzaskoma (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett 2007) 30; Quintus of Smyrna, *The Trojan Epic: Posthomerica*, trans. Alan James, Johns Hopkins New Translations from Antiquity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004) 6.212. See also a splendid list of treatments of Hydra in literature before and during the Renaissance by Marilyn McKee Ewing, *Hydras of Discourse: The Uses of the Hydra in English Renaissance Literature*, Diss. University of Colorado at Boulder, 1982 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982) 237-44.

<sup>14</sup> John W. Velz, "Shakespeare's Ovid in the Twentieth Century: A Critical Survey," *Shakespeare's Ovid: The Metamorphoses in the Plays and Poems*, ed. A. B. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 185. See also, Sarah Annes Brown, "The Metamorphosis of Narrative: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*," *The Metamorphosis of Ovid: From Chaucer to Ted Hughes* (London: Duckworth, 1999) 57-84.

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Bate, "Shakespeare's Ovid," *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567*, ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) xli. On Shakespeare and Ovid, see also Anthony Brian Taylor, "Shakespeare, Studley, and Golding," *Review of English Studies* 39 (1988) 522-27; Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); A. B. Taylor, ed., *Shakespeare's Ovid: The Metamorphoses in the Plays and Poems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John Frederick Nims, *Introduction, Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) xiii-xxxv.

<sup>16</sup> Raphael Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds: English Metamorphoses, 1567-1632* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 38. On "how Ovid permeated English literary culture at 'grass-roots' level," see also, Caroline Jameson, "Ovid in the Sixteenth Century," *Ovid*, ed. J. W. Binns (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973) 212-13; Laurence Lerner, "Ovid and the Elizabethans," *Ovid Renewed: Ovidian Influences on Literature and Art from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 121-35.

<sup>17</sup> Marvin Spevack, *The Harvard Concordance to Shakespeare* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of

Hercules not only appears in the texts, but also actually comes on in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

The comic characters stage a play within the play to entertain the nobles in Act 5, where they represent the Nine Worthies. Holofernes introduces Moss, Armado's page, who disguises himself as "Hercules" to the audiences as follows:

Great Hercules is presented by this imp,  
Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed canis;  
And when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp,  
Thus did he strangle serpents in his manus. (5.2.580-83)

Since there is no recorded performance of *Coriolanus* prior to 1681, when Nahum Tate made an adaptation entitled *The Ingratitude of a Common-Wealth: or, The Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus*, we do not know how Shakespeare's audiences reacted the original play.<sup>18</sup> However, most of those who heard *Coriolanus* at the Globe or the Blackfriars in 1608-09 must have been educated enough to understand what Hercules meant and what they heard.<sup>19</sup> Many of the playhouse audiences would be literate, London having a higher rate of literacy than elsewhere, though literacy is "by no means a straightforward guide to the make-up of playhouse audiences."<sup>20</sup> Even if there is no doubt that Hercules was a

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Harvard University Press, 1973). The following URL is also convenient:

<<http://www.opensourceshakespeare.com/concordance/>>.

<sup>18</sup> John Ripley, *Coriolanus on Stage in England and America, 1609-1994* (London: Associated University Presses, 1998) 34-70; N. Tate, *The Ingratitude of a Common-Wealth: Or, the Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus, As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969). See *Coriolanus* in performance, see also R. B. Parker, ed., *The Tragedy of Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 115-135; Lee Bliss, ed., *Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, updated ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 63-111; Peter Holland, ed., *Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013) 464-68.

<sup>19</sup> As Peter Holland puts it, "The play's venue, like its dates of writing and of first performance, remains impossible to determine with complete assurance." Peter Holland, ed., Introduction, *Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013) 77.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 64-65. See also, David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 129; Ann Jennalie Cook, "Audiences: Investigation, Interpretation, Invention," *A New History of Early English Drama*, eds. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) 316-18. Gurr analyses the mental composition of the early playgoers in the age of Shakespeare: "The mental composition of any individual playgoer must have varied according to a complex of factors ranging from the physical

well-known mythological hero in the age of Shakespeare, we have to shake off the preconceived idea that Hercules was solely a heroic figure. By overturning this preconception, we can notice that the hero symbolised “eloquence” and “virtue,” concepts that had had special meanings in the Renaissance. Once this is established, it is possible to explore the roots, and so, power, of the idea of Hercules as virtuous and eloquent, the task this thesis undertakes.

Similarly, although Hydra, too, was well known in the age of Shakespeare, as a many-headed monster, there is room for reconsideration of this image. The word “Hydra” occurs only five times, but the connotations of the word and its combination with “Hercules” create complexity and even profundity.<sup>21</sup> The five uses of the word “Hydra” in Shakespeare can be roughly divided into two categories as referring to the fickle multitude or to “the flexibility of the self.”<sup>22</sup> The two categories reflect significant aspects of European society and thought. The former expresses the deep concerns about unstable social order, social bonds and the danger of dissent which characterise the Reformation and

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condition of the playgoer’s feet or stomach, or the hat worn by the playgoer in front, to the hearer’s familiarity with Ovid or Holinshed. Education and taste in reading, the contrasting social and political allegiances of blue apron and flat cap culture against the court gallants and law students, all influenced the kind of play written for the different playhouses and must to some extent therefore reflect at least the poets’ and players’ expectations of their customers” (98). In this thesis, we proceed to our discussion, bearing the educated hearers familiar with “Ovid or Holinshed” in our mind. For the impact of London’s privileged upon Elizabethan theatres, see Ann Jennalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare’s London, 1576-1642* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981) 95-96: “The presence of so many wealthy, titled, ambitious, educated, sophisticated, and relatively idle people had a significant influence upon all aspects of life in London. . . . In fact, the city’s complex, cosmopolitan culture principally reflected the tastes and temperament of this select group. And whereas it is possible that mere coincidence accounted for the convergence of thousands of England’s elite into the city concurrently with the rise of impressive theaters and the first emergence of drama as a profitable commercial enterprise, the surviving evidence seems to indicate a much closer connection between London’s playhouses and London’s privileged”. On the differences between the audiences in indoor theatres such as the Blackfriars and Whitefriars, and those in the amphitheatres such as the Curtain Theatre and the Globe Theatre, see Lucy Munro, *Children of the Queen’s Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 61-66.

<sup>21</sup> *Coriolanus*, see page 13 (3.1.96); *1 Henry IV*, “They grow like Hydra’s heads” (5.4.24); *2 Henry IV*, “this Hydra son of war is born” (4.1.264); *Henry V*, “Hydra-headed wilfulness” (1.1.36); and *Othello*, “as many mouths as Hydra” (2.3.297).

<sup>22</sup> The expression “flexibility of the self” is used in Thomas M. Greene, “The Flexibility of the Self in Renaissance Literature,” *The Disciplines of Criticism*, eds. Peter Demetz, Thomas Greene and Lowry Nelson Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) 241-64.

Renaissance. In addition, the phrase “many-headed multitude” to describe the people’s whimsicality is closely connected with Humanistic thought.<sup>23</sup> The latter exhibits a difference in the notion of self or identity between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Pope Innocent III emphasised the misery of man in the Middle Ages, but Giovanni Pico della Mirandola positively praised the transformative chameleon-like human self in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man* in the Renaissance.<sup>24</sup> Of course, this contrast is oversimplified, but it would be true that the notion of self or identity in the Middle Ages differed from that in the Renaissance.<sup>25</sup> Shakespeare’s usage of the self changing like the many-headed monster may reflect a positive view of human malleability, or at least certain kinds of human transformability; and, certainly, Shakespeare’s plays share the

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<sup>23</sup> In this thesis, we mainly use the word “multitude” to describe the crowd or the mob. See the explanation of “Masses” by Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. ed. (London: Fontana Press, 1988) 192: “In C16 and C17 the key word was multitude. . . . Although there was often reference to the vulgar and the rabble, the really significant noun was multitude, often with reinforcing description of numbers in many-headed. There were also base multitude, giddy multitude, hydra-headed monster multitude and headless multitude”; Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris, *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) 207-09. The comment on “Mass” in *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* hardly mentions the historical differences among the words such as the crowd, the mob, the mass, and the multitude.

<sup>24</sup> Pope Innocent III, *On the Misery of Man*, trans. Bernard Murchland, *Two Views of Man: Pope Innocent III, On the Misery of Man, Giannozzo Manetti, On the Dignity of Man*, Milestones of Thought in the History of Ideas (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1966) 1-60; Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, trans. Elizabeth Livermoore Forbes, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) 225. In original Latin, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio de hominis dignitate, De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari*, ed. Eugenio Garin, Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano 1 (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1942) 106.

<sup>25</sup> The term “Renaissance” which means “rebirth” had been used by Voltaire and Stendhal before the French historian Jules Michelet, but Michelet practically created it as a historical notion. See Jules Michelet, *Renaissance*, eds. Paul Viallaneix and Robert Casanova, *Œuvres complètes 7: Histoire de France au seizième siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1978) 47-259. For Michelet’s treatment of the Renaissance, see Peter Murray and Linda Murray, *The Art of the Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1963) 9; Arthur Mitzman, *Michelet, Historian: Rebirth and Romanticism in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Lucien Febvre, *Michelet et la Renaissance* (Paris: Flammarion, 1992). See also, B. L. Ullman, “Renaissance: The Word and The Underlying Concept,” *Studies in Philology* 49.2 (1952) 105-18; Craig W. Kallendorf, “Renaissance,” *A Companion to the Classical Tradition*, eds. Craig W. Kallendorf and Books Dawson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) 31-33. Michelet premised his argument on a fundamental difference between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and Jacob Burckhardt basically adopted Michelet’s historical view. See Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, ed. Peter Burke, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 1990); Jo Tollebeek, “‘Renaissance’ and ‘Fossilization’: Michelet, Burckhardt, and Huizinga,” *Renaissance Studies* 15.3 (2001) 355.

preoccupations of his contemporaries and, significantly, of earlier Humanist scholars.

Hercules and Hydra have become so prominent as symbols that Shakespearians have overlooked the intrinsic and inherent attributes of these mythical figures. Therefore we have to study what Hercules and Hydra really represented in the age of the Reformation and Renaissance.

Whereas Shakespeare's use of the term "Hercules" alone might produce a diffuse discussion, the connection between Hercules and Hydra offers a tightly organized set of implications. When we scrutinise representations of Hercules and Hydra in Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* provides an appropriate starting point for the discussion because it can be said that the play is the final settlement of Hercules-Hydra issues in his long career.

*Coriolanus* was first printed in the 1623 Folio, but it was probably written around 1608.<sup>26</sup>

*Coriolanus* was categorised as a tragedy in the First Folio, but it is also a political and historical play.<sup>27</sup> *Coriolanus* highlights the conflict between the patricians including the heroic Coriolanus and the plebeians, whom Coriolanus describes as "the many-headed

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<sup>26</sup> Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Coriolanus, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, the Roman Plays: Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus*, vol. 5, 8 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) 453-95; Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, David Scott Kastan and Harold Jenkins, eds., *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, rev. ed. (London: Thomson Learning, 2007) 213; Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, eds., *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, rev. ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997) 131; E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, reissued ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) 271. The play is not only Shakespeare's last Roman play, but also a turning point in his style; before and after *Coriolanus* Shakespeare wrote only the so-called late romances: *Pericles* in 1607-8, *The Winter's Tale* in 1609-10, *Cymbeline* in 1610, and *The Tempest* in 1610-11. For this chronology, see Proudfoot 253, 979, 1071, 1279; Wells and Taylor, eds., *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* 130-32; Chambers 243-74. For the textual criticism, see Lee Bliss, "Scribes, Compositors, and Annotators: The Nature of the Copy for the First Folio Text of *Coriolanus*," *Studies in Bibliography* 50 (1997) 224-61; Wells and Taylor, eds., *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* 593-600.

<sup>27</sup> For the genre of *Coriolanus*, see Patricia K. Meszaros, "'There Is a World Elsewhere': Tragedy and History in *Coriolanus*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 16.2 (1976) 273-85; James Holstun, "Tragic Superfluity in *Coriolanus*," *ELH* 50.3 (1983) 485-507; Karen Aubrey, "Shifting Masks, Roles, and Satiric Personae: Suggestions for Exploring the Edge of Genre in *Coriolanus*," *Coriolanus: Critical Essays*, ed. David Wheeler (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995) 299-338. Meszaros explores the difficulty in specifying the genre of the play by "reconciling tragic form, historical content, and a frequently ironic tone" (274); Holstun suggests that the play satirises the conventions of tragedy; and Aubrey also emphasises the satiric elements of the play.



multitude” like a “Hydra” (2.3.16-17; 3.1.96). Coriolanus is also compared to “Hercules” by Menenius criticising the tribunes who manipulate the multitude:

COMINIUS. *(to the tribunes)* He’ll shake your Rome about your ears.  
MENENIUS. As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit. (4.6.103-04)

Battles between Hercules and the many-headed Hydra are suggested in the play as we shall see. The many-headed multitude is characterised by changeability. The Hydra-headed multitude first appears in 2 *Henry VI*, where Shakespeare stresses the shallowness and fickleness of the crowd through Jack Cade’s Rebellion (4.2-9), and continues through the English Histories, *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet* to Shakespeare’s final surviving comment on the many-headed multitude, in *Coriolanus*. As this pervasive presence suggests, Hydra is not a marginal metaphor, but one that offers significant insights into Shakespeare’s plays and, through them, into Renaissance culture more widely. Crucially, for Shakespeare Hydra symbolises subjects whereas Hercules reminds him of rulers: in Shakespeare’s plays the relationship between rulers and subjects is a pivotal theme. Closer examination of Hercules and Hydra leads us to a deeper understanding of the presentation of rulers and subjects by Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

This study adopts the following procedure. In this Introduction, in order to illuminate the indissoluble relationship between Hercules and Hydra, we examine the presentation of Hercules-Hydra in *Coriolanus*. Next, the thesis will test five hypotheses on Hercules and Hydra, one in each of the five chapters. Chapter 1 will discuss the roots of the phrase “many-headed multitude” in *Coriolanus*: as a reflection, in complex form, of the really existing social instability in late Tudor and early Stuart England, which experienced many rebellions and famines; and it is in the tradition of Renaissance

Humanism. Building on this material, Chapter 2 explores the way some European monarchs compared themselves to Hercules. Third and Fourth, the study analyses Herculean “eloquence” and “virtue,” which are quintessentially Humanistic terms, and it traces the use of the “eloquent” and “virtuous” Hercules as a model for European monarchs in the Renaissance. Finally, we study Hydra as a symbol of “the flexibility of the self” in the Humanistic tradition. While each chapter investigates a distinct aspect of Hercules and Hydra and their significance in English Renaissance writing, the primary aim of our exploration of these ideas is to shed new light on *Coriolanus*.

### A Preliminary Analysis of *Coriolanus*

In order to clarify the indissoluble relationship between Hercules and Hydra, let us turn to an analysis of *Coriolanus*.<sup>28</sup> Since Shakespeare deals with the relationship between the multitude and the rulers in detail in the play, it displays some of what

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<sup>28</sup> We need to frame this project in relation to the critical field of *Coriolanus*. For the general critical history of *Coriolanus*, see James Emerson Phillips, Jr., ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of 'Coriolanus': A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970); B. A. Brockman, ed., *Coriolanus: A Casebook* (London: Macmillan, 1977); Bruce King, *Coriolanus: The Critics Debate* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1989); Alexander Leggatt and Lois Norem, eds., *Coriolanus: An Annotated Bibliography*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 483 (New York: Garland, 1989); Brian Vickers, ed., *William Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage*, rep. ed., 6 vols. (London: Routledge, 1995); David George, ed., *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare: The Critical Tradition (London: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004); Lee Bliss, “What Hath a Quarter-Century of *Coriolanus* Criticism Wrought?,” *Shakespearean International Yearbook 2: Where Are We Now in Shakespearean Studies?*, eds. W. R. Elton and John M. Mucciolo (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2002) 63-75. Lee Bliss succinctly summarises the critical history of *Coriolanus* for twenty five years until 2002. We have to update her bibliography to 2013, but the update is limited because *Coriolanus* as a subject of research is not so popular as, for example, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as Annabel M. Patterson states that “*Coriolanus* has never acquired the privileged place in Shakespearean criticism occupied pre-eminently by *Hamlet* and the Jacobean tragedies.” See Annabel M. Patterson, “‘Speak, speak!’: The Popular Voice and the Jacobean State,” *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989) 120. Bliss appropriately categorises it into eight areas of scholarly debate, and illuminates each category by introducing from approximately five to ten articles per research area, while, of course, they often overlap: the play’s political themes including the body politics (see the note 37 of this Introduction); the mother-son relationship between Volumnia and Coriolanus (note 41); the gender and identity (note 41); the genre (note 27); the rhetoric and language (note 33); the performance (note 18); the textual criticism (note 26); and the classical and Renaissance influences (note 4). These articles in each category include Bliss’s selection and my update.

Renaissance writers understood as key features of Hydra. Complaining about the multitude, Coriolanus compares them to the many-headed Hydra:

O good but most unwise patricians, why,  
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus  
Given *Hydra* here to choose an officer [Sicinius, tribune of the Roman people]  
....., being but  
The horn and noise o'th' monster's, . . . ?  
(3.1.94-100: emphasis added)

One reason that this representation of Hydra is noteworthy is that the monster does not appear at all in the sources scholarship has understood Shakespeare used to write the play.<sup>29</sup> Shakespeare's choice of this metaphor to describe the many-headed, fickle multitude suggests that, even though the idea was a cliché at that time, this description deserves more attention than it has hitherto received. There are two further reasons to take it seriously: first, Shakespeare devoted many lines to the description of the whimsical multitude in Rome as a central theme of the play; and, secondly, Coriolanus himself, swearing revenge against Rome, is compared to Hercules; Menenius says that Coriolanus could overrun the city easily "As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit" (4.6.104). This simile alludes to the eleventh labour of Hercules, in which he stole the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides guarded by "an oughly Dragon" called "Ladon," which had a "hundred heads, offspring of Typhon and Echidna," and which "spoke with many and divers sorts of voices."<sup>30</sup> The labour was easy for Hercules because he killed the hundred-headed Ladon

<sup>29</sup> See Bullough above, and Kenneth Muir, "The Background of *Coriolanus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 10.2 (1959) 137-45.

<sup>30</sup> Ovid 4.796, 9.234; Rhodius Apollonius, *The Argonautica*, trans. R. C. Seaton, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1912) 4.1393; Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. James George Frazer, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1961) 2.5.11. See also Apollodorus, *The Library of Greek Mythology*, trans. Robin Hard, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 2.5.11. While Shakespeare probably did not know Apollonius (3 BC) and Apollodorus (180 BC-120 BC), Erasmus referred to "Apollonius" in an epistle on grammar school curricula and advised grammar school students in England to read "the Greek mythology of Apollodorus" (Baldwin 2.249, 1.121). See also, G. R. Hibbard, ed., *Coriolanus*, by William

with arrows.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, it can be said that Menenius's line implies that Herculean Coriolanus will easily avenge himself on the Hydra-headed (or Ladon-headed) multitude in Rome.<sup>32</sup> In short, the combination of Hercules and the many headed monster is fundamental to the play because one of its major preoccupations is the antagonism between the patricians of Rome (including the Herculean Coriolanus) and the Hydra-headed multitude who are supported by the tribunes of the Roman people.

The theme of tension between the patricians and the plebeians comes up several times in *Coriolanus*, most obviously in Hydra-like representations of the many-headed multitude. Coriolanus compares the multitude to "Hydra" (3.1.96). Betrayed by that "Hydra," who decided on his banishment, he consoles his grieving mother, wife, and friends: "Come, leave your tears. A brief farewell. *The beast / With many heads* butts me away" (4.1.1-2: emphasis added). Roman citizens themselves realise their monstrous brutality. When they talk about Coriolanus' promotion to consul, one of the citizens says that we are inclined to forget his great achievements in wars to protect Rome:

Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful were to make *a monster of the multitude*, of the which we, being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members. (2.3.9-13: emphasis added)

Another citizen adds:

And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us *the many-headed multitude*. (2.3.14-17: emphasis added)

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Shakespeare, Penguin Shakespeare (London: Penguin, 2005) note of 4.6.101; Bliss, ed. *Coriolanus* note of 4.6.104.

<sup>31</sup> Apollonius 4.1393.

<sup>32</sup> Shakespeare never used the word "Ladon" in his works, but he probably knew the many-headed dragon because the "mellow fruit" clearly means the apples in the garden of the Hesperides. Representations of the Hydra-headed multitude frequently appeared in European Renaissance literature, but references to Ladon are scarce.

It is not only because of their brutality but also their “giddy” characteristics that the plebeians are compared to the many-headed monster (1.1.268). Coriolanus denounces their giddiness or caprice:

You are no surer, no,  
.....  
Trust ye?  
With every minute you do change a mind,  
And call him noble that was now your hate,  
Him vile that was your garland. (1.1.170-82)

Thus, the many-tongued plebeian monster is like the nine-tongued Hydra.

This play is replete with images of a tongue or mouth. The tongues of Coriolanus and other characters are sharply contrasted in the play. On the one hand, Coriolanus’ tongue represents the sincerity of his words and actions.<sup>33</sup> When Coriolanus runs for the post of consul, Menenius urges upon him the necessity of acting in front of the plebeians and pleading with them, but Coriolanus declines to accept this advice: “What must I say? / ‘I pray, sir’? Plague upon’t, I cannot bring / My *tongue* to such a pace” (2.3.50-52: emphasis added). As a result of his obstinacy, the plebeians refuse Coriolanus’ request to recommend him for consul. Menenius deplores Coriolanus’ stubbornness: “His nature is too noble for the world. / . . . His heart’s his *mouth*. / What his breast forges, that his *tongue* must vent, / And, being angry, does forget that ever / He heard the name of death” (3.1.255-60: emphasis added). Moreover, his inflexibility is characterised by his hatred

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<sup>33</sup> For the rhetoric and language in *Coriolanus*, see Joyce Van Dyke, “Making a Scene: Language and Gesture in *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Survey* 30 (1977) 135-46; Michael West and Myron Silberstein, “The Controversial Eloquence of Shakespeare’s Coriolanus: An Anti-Ciceronian Orator?,” *Modern Philology* 102.3 (2004) 307-31; Cathy Shrank, “Civility and the City in *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54 (2003) 406-23. These critical works investigate that Van Dyke traces Coriolanus’ change of “proud idealistic integrity” in his language style (146), Coriolanus’ rhetoric is based upon not Ciceronianism but concise “Atticism stressed pure and sometimes even faintly archaic Latinity” (West and Silberstein 330), and Coriolanus’ “uncivil language is a natural extension of his antipathy to the civic community” (Shrank 408).

toward flattering acting. When Coriolanus goes to the market-place again in order to court the plebeians' favour, he reveals his hatred of flattery: "Must I go show them my unbarbed sconce? / Must I with my base *tongue* give to my noble heart / A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't" (3.2.99-101: emphasis added). He makes a declaration of resolve to his mother: "I'll mountebank their loves, / Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved / Of all the trades in Rome. . . . / I'll return consul, / Or never trust to what my *tongue* can do / I'th' way of flattery further" (3.2.132-37: emphasis added). However, he cannot fulfil this promise, and it is confirmed that his tongue is not suited to flattery. The tongue imagery is significant because Coriolanus' too honest tongue brings tragedy upon him.

On the other hand, like the tongues of Hydra the tongues of the plebeians are supple and fickle. Brutus, a tribune, criticises the misjudgement of the Roman people who authorised Coriolanus to be the consul even for a short time: "had you *tongues* to cry / Against the rectorship of judgement?" (2.3.204-05: emphasis added). Yet the tongue of this tribune himself is a target of criticism for Coriolanus, who says: "Behold, these are the tribunes of the people, / The *tongues* o'th' common mouth. I do despise them" (3.1.22-23: emphasis added). Coriolanus calls the agitating and seditious tongue of the tribune a "multitudinous *tongue*" (3.1.159: emphasis added) and a "lying *tongue*" (3.3.75: emphasis added), and he equates the tongues of the two tribunes with those of the multitude like a herd:

Are these your *herd*?  
 Must these have voices, that can yield them now  
 And straight disclaim their *tongues*? What are your offices?  
 You being their *mouthes*, why rule you not their teeth?  
(3.1.35-38: emphasis added)

Menenius also describes the multitude as a herd, calling the tribunes "the herdsmen of the

bestly plebeians” (2.1.93). Coriolanus and Menenius emphasise the relation of master to servant between the tribunes and the plebeians, who with many *tongues* also identify themselves with the tribunes, as a citizen says: “The noble tribunes are the people’s *mouths*, / And we their hands” (3.1.271-272: emphasis added). Finally, Cominius ironically says in disgust to the plebeians who easily change their principles like weathercocks: “You’re goodly things, you voices” (4.6.155). The multitude who raise their “voices” in protest are indeed as changeable as weathercocks, betraying even the tribune. A messenger says to Sicinius, “The plebeians have got your fellow tribune / And hale him up and down” (5.4.37-38).

The obsession with the tongue is clearly shown in the play, but the reason for the obsession has hardly been fully investigated by critics. Of course, editors of *Coriolanus* have pointed out the connection between the multitude’s tongue and Hydra’s tongue, but they have not paid attention to the hidden implications behind the connection. G. S. Gordon, for instance, annotated the “multitudinous tongue” (3.1.155 in his edition) as follows: “Coriolanus’s mind is obsessed by this image. He sees the people always as a monster of multitude, with its many heads, its ‘bosom multiplied’, and its multitudinous tongue.”<sup>34</sup> However, Gordon did not ask the reason of the obsession. About 100 years later than Gordon’s edition, Lee Bliss makes an annotation on the phrase, “multitudinous tongue”: “the tongue of the multitude, i.e. the tribunes (continuing the body-politic allusions); see ‘Hydra.’”<sup>35</sup> Bliss probably borrowed the annotation from R. B. Parker’s edition: “those who speak for the many, i.e. the Tribunes (yet another body-politic

<sup>34</sup> G. S. Gordon, ed., *Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Coriolanus, Twelfth Night* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911) 123. See also Horace Howard Furness, ed., *The Tragedie of Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1928) 310-11, note of 3.1.185.

<sup>35</sup> Bliss, ed., *Coriolanus* note of 3.1.157.

reference).”<sup>36</sup> These editors seem to be satisfied with pointing out the connection between the multitude’s tongue and Hydra’s tongue, and they do not seek to explain the reason for the obsessive recurrence of the image. Parker and Bliss’s references to the “body-politic” point to an idea that pervades the play, as in Menenius’ fable of the belly which starts from: “There was a time when all the body’s members, / Rebelled against the belly, thus accused it” (1.1.94-95).<sup>37</sup> This body-politic imagery cannot, however, give a conclusive reason for the fascination with the tongue, nor a universal key to the understanding of the play.

Explanatory notes to the phrase “many-headed multitude” (2.3.16-17) by Parker and Bliss are also unsatisfactory. Parker provides a commentary on the phrase (2.3.15 in his edition): “A proverbial expression (Tilley M1308) of classical origin to describe the instability of people *en masse*: cf. 3.1.95 (Hydra), 4.1.1-2”; and Bliss borrows Parker’s annotation here again (2.3.14 in her edition): “A proverbial expression (Tilley M1308) of classical origin denoting the instability of human nature and, by extension, democracy; compare ‘Hydra’, 3.1.92-6, and ‘the beast / With many heads’, 4.1.1-2.” Bliss’s imitation of Parker’s commentary may indicate slight attention to the phrase. Furthermore, the same suggestion by the two editors that the phrase “many-headed multitude” was a

<sup>36</sup> Parker, ed., *The Tragedy of Coriolanus* note of 3.1.158. Holland in his edition (2013) annotates the phrase (3.1.157) just as follows: “the tongue of the multitude (i.e. the Tribunes as the people’s voices).”

<sup>37</sup> For the body politic in *Coriolanus*, see Clifford Chalmers Huffman, *Coriolanus in Context* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1971); Andrew Gurr, “*Coriolanus* and the Body Politic,” *Shakespeare Survey* 28 (1975) 63-69; Michael D. Bristol, “Lenten Butchery: Legitimation Crisis in *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, eds. Jean E. Howard, Marion F. O’Connor and Margaret Ferguson (New York: Methuen, 1987) 207-24; Zvi Jagendorf, “*Coriolanus*: Body Politic and Private Parts,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41 (1990) 455-69; Eve Rachelle Sanders, “The Body of the Actor in *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57 (2006) 387-412; Maurizio Calbi, “States of Exception: Auto-Immunity and the Body Politic in Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*,” *Questioning Bodies in Shakespeare’s Rome*, eds. Maria Del Sapio Garbero, Nancy Isenberg, and Maddalena Pennacchia, *Interfacing Science, Literature, and the Humanities / ACUME 2* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010) 77-94; Parker ed. *Coriolanus*, Introduction 80-82. These books and articles respectively analyse *Coriolanus* comprehensively, considering Jacobean and Roman politics (Huffman), compare Plutarch’s belly fable with its alteration by Shakespeare (Gurr), connect body imagery with Carnival and Lent (Bristol), use Karl Marx’s class theory and Jacques Derrida’s “auto-immunity” to examine the Roman society (Jagendorf and Calbi), and find antitheatrical ideology in *Coriolanus*’ body (Sanders).



“proverbial expression (Tilley M1308) of classical origin” suggests a preconception that the phrase is not worthy of serious consideration.<sup>38</sup> It is true that the phrase was a “proverbial expression of classical origin,” as Morris Palmer Tilley pointed out, and we will argue in Chapter 1.<sup>39</sup> All proverbs have processes by which they became proverbs; analysis of the process in this case will give us a powerful tool to clarify why *Coriolanus* is pervaded by tongue and mouth images.

The play evidently opposes Coriolanus to the Hydra-headed multitude including the tribunes with many tongues. There is no doubt that this opposition is at its centre. But why did Shakespeare use these mythical representations to describe these patricians and plebeians? The imagery was a cliché, therefore Shakespeare used it. It might be replied that scholars seem to have subscribed to this simplistic answer. But we cannot understand *Coriolanus* without considering the Hercules-Hydra representations multilayered topical, cultural, political, and religious meanings underlying them.

When Hydra appears in the text, a Renaissance audience would be prompted to recall the figure of Hercules because the two are two sides of the same coin. Critics have noted the comparison between the multitude and Hydra, both of which have many tongues in the play, but they have paid little attention to the antagonistic relationship between Hydra and Hercules. In other words, when Coriolanus calls the plebeians the “many-headed multitude,” he tacitly implies that his own role is that of Hercules who exterminated the many-tongued monster. This mutual antagonism is an indispensable element of the play, because the hostility between the patricians and plebeians is at the centre of the play.

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<sup>38</sup> Holland in his edition points out “the play’s fascination with the image of the organic interconnection of the people into a single monstrous being” (note on 2.3.15-16), but he does not explore the reason for the fascination.

<sup>39</sup> Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Collection of the Proverbs Found in English Literature and the Dictionaries of the Period* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950) M1308.

Why, then, does Hercules appear in the play: “As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit” (4.6.104)? Is it only because he is a mythical hero, like other heroic figures referred to the text? Although Menenius’s comparison of Coriolanus with Hercules seems merely to stress the ease of Coriolanus’s task, Coriolanus is given other attributes that would enable and prompt the audience to recognise him as the mythical hero, Hercules. Coriolanus is clearly a *heroic* figure, so it is natural that he is initially compared to two mythical *heroic* figures, Hector and Mars. Virgilia, Coriolanus’ wife, worries about his wounds in battle, but Volumnia, his mother, praises them as honourable: “His bloody brow” looks “lovelier / Than Hector’s forehead” (1.3.40-44). Aufidius, general of the Volscian army, also calls Coriolanus “Hector” in battle with him: “Wert thou the Hector / That was the whip of your bragged progeny, / Thou shouldst not scape me here” (1.9.11-13). Moreover, Coriolanus is compared to Mars. Since *Coriolanus* is a Roman play, it is fitting that Coriolanus often calls upon the Roman god of war for protection (1.4.10; 5.6.102). When Coriolanus goes over to the enemy side, Aufidius calls Coriolanus “thou Mars” (4.5.119); and Aufidius’ servingman gossips about Coriolanus: “Why, he is so made on here within as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o’th’ table, no question asked him by any of the senators but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him” (4.5.196-200). Seemingly Hector and Mars are used to underline Coriolanus’ heroism.

However, these mythical figures, Mars and Hector, are not connected with heroism in the text, because we realise that the comparison of Coriolanus to Mars by the Volscian army is just skilful flattery. The name of Hector disappears after Act 1 Scene 9, at which point the play’s interest seems to shift from Hector to Hercules. It is true that the names of Hector and Mars emphasise Coriolanus’ heroism, but this emphasis is not fundamental to

the play, because these two heroic figures are scarcely connected to the central theme of the antagonism between Coriolanus and the Hydra-headed multitude.

Clearly, we need to pursue further investigation of Hercules. After the tribunes and citizens decide to banish Coriolanus from Rome, he tries to console his grieving mother:

Nay, mother,  
Resume that spirit when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of *Hercules*  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved  
Your husband so much sweat. (4.1.16-20: emphasis added)

Here, Coriolanus identifies himself with Hercules' son. Nonetheless, Shakespeare never mentions the existence of Coriolanus' father. This play is a play in which a father is absent.<sup>40</sup> This strange situation foregrounds the strange relationship between Coriolanus and his mother, Volumnia, who says: "If *my son were my husband*, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love" (1.3.2-5: emphasis added).<sup>41</sup> Her lines are in the subjunctive

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<sup>40</sup> Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes* in 1579 says: "Caius Martius [later Coriolanus], . . . being left an orphan by his father, was brought up under his mother a widowe," in Bullough 505.

<sup>41</sup> For the mother-son relationship between Volumnia and Coriolanus, see Coppélia Kahn, "The Milking Babe and the Bloody Man in *Coriolanus* and *Macbeth*," *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) 151-92; Madelon Sprengnether, "Annihilating Intimacy in *Coriolanus*," *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Mary Beth Rose (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986) 89-111; Janet Adelman, "Escaping the Matrix: The Construction of Masculinity in *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus*," *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to The Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 146-64. These criticism explore Coriolanus psychoanalytically, focusing upon "dilemmas of masculine selfhood revealed in the design of the works as a whole" (Kahn 2), "gender structures of patriarchal culture" (Sprengnether 89), and masculinity "constructed in response to maternal power, and in the absence of a father" (Adelman 146). On the gender and identity in Coriolanus, see Lisa Lowe, "'Say I play the man I am': Gender and Politics in *Coriolanus*," *Kenyon Review New Series* 8 (1986) 86-95; James Kuzner, "Unbuilding the City: *Coriolanus* and the Birth of Republican Rome," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007) 174-99; Lucy Munro, "*Coriolanus* and the Little Eyases: The Boyhood of Shakespeare's Hero," *Shakespeare and Childhood*, eds. Kate Chedgzoy, Susanne Greenhalgh and Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 80-95; Jason Edwards, "'Tell me not wherein I seem unnatural?': Queer Meditations on *Coriolanus* in the Time of War," *Shakespeare: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Madhavi Menon (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011) 80-88. These articles examine the relationship between mother and son, using a feminist approach (Lowe), boyhood and masculinity in Coriolanus (Munro), Coriolanus' sodomy disturbing the Roman order (Kuzner), and queer desire among Coriolanus, Cominius, and Aufidius

mood, but it is significant that “Volumnia always imagines herself as the hero’s *wife*, not mother.”<sup>42</sup> Hence, through this chain of association, it is once again possible to identify Coriolanus with Hercules.

There are some further traces of how Shakespeare guides the audience to identify Coriolanus with Hercules. First is the use of the number twelve, the number of the Herculean labours. Volumnia’s phrase, “Six of his labours” (4.1.19), clearly refers to them, but the following words of Volumnia also seem to allude to the twelve labours: “had I *a dozen sons*, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius’, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action” (1.3.22-25: emphasis added).

As Hercules, who performs the labours, is not a human but a demigod, Shakespeare intentionally transforms Coriolanus from a human into a demigod in the text, for example when Brutus says that “Such a pothier / As if that whatsoever god who leads him / Were slily crept into his human powers / And gave him graceful posture” (2.1.215-18). Moreover, Brutus criticises Coriolanus’ arrogance toward the plebeians: “You speak o’th’ people as if you were a god / To punish, not a man of their infirmity” (3.1.85-86). Cominius also stresses Coriolanus’ superiority to ordinary humans:

the deeds of Coriolanus  
Should not be uttered feebly. It is held  
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and  
Most dignifies the haver. If it be,  
The man I speak of cannot in the world  
Be singly counterpoised. (2.2.82-87)

As we will see in Chapter 5, “valour” and “virtue” are qualities of Hercules. Coriolanus’

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(Edwards).

<sup>42</sup> See the note on 4.1.18 and Introduction 48 of Parker, ed. *Coriolanus*. See also the note on 4.1.17 of Bliss, ed. *Coriolanus*.

apotheosis is retold by Cominius who reports his horrifying attack on Rome after the banishment. According to Cominius, Coriolanus is a god of the Volscian army: “He is their god. He leads them like a thing / Made by some other deity than nature, / That shapes man better” (4.6.94-96). And eight lines later, Menenius remarks that Coriolanus will invade Rome as easily as “Hercules did shake down mellow fruit” (4.6.104). Our investigation so far should have made it clear that Shakespeare emphasises a Herculean Coriolanus and gives him the personality of a demigod.

As this preliminary analysis of some of the play’s representations of Hercules-Hydra makes evident, such representations are not as simple as they look. They are further complicated by the possibility that Coriolanus is Hydra. Hydra represents the Roman changeable citizens, and the many-headed monster is an enemy to be controlled by Herculean Coriolanus. However, this power relationship is reversed by the banishment of Coriolanus from Rome. Therefore, from a Roman vantage point, Coriolanus, as a rebel against Rome, consequently turns into a monstrous dragon or Hydra to be subdued by Rome. In the following paragraphs, we focus upon the Hydra-like Coriolanus as an enemy of Hercules.

After Coriolanus has been condemned to banishment, he speaks to his mother with strong determination in his bosom:

Believe’t not lightly—though I go alone,  
Like to a *lonely dragon that his fen*  
*Makes feared* and talked of more than seen, your son  
Will or exceed the common or be caught  
With cautelous baits and practice. (4.1.30-34: emphasis added)

The combination of “dragon” and “fen” reminds us of Hydra. As Edward Topsell explained under the heading “Of the HYDRA, supposed to be killed by Hercules” in his

study *The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and Insects*, the monster was slain “in the fenne of Lerna, therefore there grew a Proverb of *Lerna malorum*, to signifie a multitude of unresistable evils.”<sup>43</sup> “Fen,” in fact, acts as a keyword which makes it possible to connect the dragon with Hydra. For example, in Book 1 of Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*, King Arthur and Una meet the giant Orgoglio and his mistress Duessa when they travel to rescue the knight of the Redcrosse or St. George. The giant gives Duessa “gold and purple pall to weare, / And triple crowne set on her head full hye, / And her endowd with royall maiestye, . . . A monstrous beast ybredd in filthy *fen*” (1.7.16.3-8: emphasis added).<sup>44</sup> This beast is compared to Hydra as follows:

Such one it was, as that renowned Snake  
Which great *Alcides* in *Stremona* slew,  
Long fostred in the filth of *Lerna* lake,  
Whose many heades out budding euer new,  
Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew: (1.7.17.1-5)

“Lerna lake” is, for Spenser too, Hydra’s habitat. Furness annotates the phrase “a lonely dragon” as follows: “Shakespeare was probably thinking of the Hydra of the Lernaean marsh to which reference has been made before in this play.”<sup>45</sup>

Although Furness connects the dragon in the fen with Hydra, he gives the following footnote to 4.1.35:

The opposite of the many-headed gregarious beast, the Hydra of the Lernaean Marsh, which it was one of the labours of Hercules to destroy, and to which he has compared the people. The Poet shows the loneliness of spirit felt by him amid the sense of strength, the consciousness of the ability to be dangerous. Out of that rankling sense of loneliness and unbeheld power, brooded over stoically here, which the Poet shows as the right soil for what is to come, his

<sup>43</sup> Edward Topsell, *The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and Insects*, ed. Willy Ley, vol. 2, 3 vols. (London: Frank Cass, 1967) 735.

<sup>44</sup> A. C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita and Toshiyuki Suzuki, eds., *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spenser, Longman Annotated English Poets, rev. 2nd. ed. (Harlow, England: Pearson Education, 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Furness, ed., *Coriolanus* 403.

revenge will grow.<sup>46</sup>

It is true that the one-headed Coriolanus is the opposite of the many-headed beast, and it is natural that Shakespeare did not describe Coriolanus as “many-headed.” Nevertheless, the text does suggest the transformation of Hercules into the dragon. Aufidius says that Coriolanus “shows good husbandry for the Volscian state, / Fights *dragon-like*, and does achieve as soon / As draw his sword” (4.7.23-25: emphasis added). Sicinius also voices his astonishment at the dramatic change in Coriolanus: “Is’t possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?” (5.4.9-10), and Menenius replies: “*This Martius* [Coriolanus] *is grown from man to dragon*. He has wings, he’s more than a creeping thing” (5.4.12-14: emphasis added). Just as the “lonely dragon” hiding in the fen turns out to be a dragon with “wings,” Coriolanus has changed into the furious dragon—a characterisation which alludes to Hydra as an enemy to Rome.

While Hercules and Hydra are two sides of the same coin, this does not amount to a full explanation of the possibility that Coriolanus is both Hercules and Hydra to Rome. We find a clue which makes it possible to interpret the duality of Coriolanus when we notice that Hydra is both an internal and external enemy to Coriolanus. When Herculean Coriolanus is in Rome, the Hydra-headed multitude is his enemy; but when he is on the Volscian side, he becomes Hydra for Rome. This duality is skilfully woven through the play, and can be traced in the text. Thus, Sicinius who instigates the Roman citizens to raise a riot says, “What is the city but the people?” (3.1.199); and all the citizens reply to the tribune, “True, / The people are the city” (3.1.199-200). Here, the plebeians are Rome, and Hydra represents them. The Roman Hydra is Coriolanus’ external enemy, but at the

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<sup>46</sup> Furness, ed., *Coriolanus* 403.

same time the many-headed multitude in Rome is an enemy within the country. He himself realises this contradiction:

I would they were barbarians, as they are,  
Though in Rome littered; not Romans, as they are not,  
Though calved i'th' porch o'th' Capitol. (3.1.237-39)

The word “barbarians” signifies non-Romans, therefore “they are” an external enemy.

However, “they are” Romans, therefore “they are” an internal enemy, and, unfortunately, he himself is also a member of the Roman people. A perplexing problem for Coriolanus is that the Hydra-headed multitude are not “barbarians” but Romans, and that his head can be a head of the many-headed Roman Hydra. The Herculean Coriolanus tries to subdue Rome, but when he rebels against Rome, he consequently has to cut off his own head because he is one of the Romans. This interchangeability or contradiction causes Coriolanus’ tragedy, (and we work towards an exploration of this in Chapter 5). Thus, the Hydra figures are a really crucial element in the play.

In the myth Shakespeare encountered in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Hercules’ death, too, is closely connected with Hydra. Similarly, the Herculean Coriolanus is killed by the conspirators in front of the furious Hydra-headed multitude. As we find in the *Metamorphoses*, after Hercules disposed of Hydra, he dipped his arrows in the gall of the many-headed monster, and henceforth these poisonous arrows became a lethal weapon, which ironically caused his own death.<sup>47</sup> With the arrow Hercules killed the Centaur Nessus who tried to rape his wife Deianeira, but at the point of death Nessus secretly handed his “shirt” soaked “with poyson foule of Lerna Snake” to Deianeira who suffered from her faithless husband and said to her: “it [the shirt] had the power to kindle Cupids

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<sup>47</sup> Ovid 9.151-328.



fyre” (Ovid 9.155-59). Deianeira eventually gave Nessus’ poisonous blood-anointed shirt as a love-charm to Hercules in order to preserve the love of her husband, without knowing that she had been deceived by Nessus (9.188-93). Hercules wore the shirt, and the poison of Hydra in the blood of Nessus caused his death (9.194-99). In short, Hercules was killed by Hydra which he had once defeated, just as Coriolanus was killed by the conspirators supported by the Hydra-headed multitude he had once defeated.

This irony—that Hercules defeated Hydra but eventually, with assistance from Hercules himself, Hydra killed Hercules—carries over to *Coriolanus*. As we have seen, Coriolanus is given attributes which would enable and prompt the audience to recognise him as both Hercules and Hydra. This contradictory duality is extremely suggestive because Coriolanus’ Hydra-like body rises in revolt against the Hydra-like body politic which is ultimately controlled by the many-headed multitude. In other words, the Herculean Coriolanus is finally ruined by means of both his enemy, the Hydra-headed multitude, and what might be called his inner rebellious Hydra, into which he has been transformed from Hercules during the play, just as Hercules was destroyed by his inner poisonous blood of Hydra. In sum, then, the patterning of Hydra and Hercules, which is used to signal the implosion that precipitates Coriolanus’s death, can be seen to be central to the play and to its interpretation.

### Structure of the Thesis

Close focus on the uses of Hercules and Hydra in *Coriolanus* can offer a new interpretation of the play—one which shows the important influence of the European

Humanistic thought during the Renaissance on the play. Whilst this thesis does not rely on the particular critical approaches, it is influenced by a wide field of writing on the uses and interpretations of myth during the Renaissance and some literary approaches—especially the work of the Warburg School. In other words, the thesis employs earlier methods of examining the reception and circulation of myth, transferring these from the Italian to the English Renaissance; and it draws on the iconology of the Warburg School and the history of ideas.<sup>48</sup> As Martin Warnke aptly condenses, “Warburg’s methodology of cultural historic analysis of image motifs, his iconography and

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<sup>48</sup> The iconological researches of the Warburg School are too numerous to list. Here the representative works related to this thesis are listed: Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. Kurt W. Forster and David Britt, Texts & Documents (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999); Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*, enlarged and revised ed. (London: Faber, 1968); Edgar Wind, *The Eloquence of Symbols: Studies in Humanist Art*, ed. Jaynie Anderson, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Daniel Pickering Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London: Duckworth, 1972); Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987); Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-96); Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, trans. James P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953); Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963); Ernst Hans Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 2nd ed., Studies in the Art of the Renaissance 2 (London: Phaidon, 1978); Fritz Saxl, *Lectures* (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1957); André Chastel, *The Age of Humanism: Europe, 1480-1530*, trans. Katherine M. Delavenay and E. M. Gwyer (London: Thames & Hudson, 1963); André Chastel, *Marsile Ficin et l'art*, Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance 14 (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1975); Erwin Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1945); Erwin Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst mit einem Nachwort zur Neuauflage von Dieter Wuttke*, rep. ed., Studien der Bibliothek Warburg 18 (Berlin: Gerb. Mann Verlag, 1997); Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. Christopher S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 1991); Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*, Icon ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1972); E. H. Gombrich and F. Saxl, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Phaidon, 1986); Mario Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, 2nd ed. (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1964). See also, Peggy Munoz Simonds, *Iconographic Research in English Renaissance Literature: A Critical Guide*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 1344 (New York: Garland, 1995). On a history of ideas, see, for example, Arthur O. Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948); Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea*, The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University, 1933 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936); Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *The Breaking of the Circle: Studies in the Effect of the “New Science” upon Seventeenth Century Poetry*, rev. ed., The Norman Wait Harris Lectures Delivered at Northwestern University, July 1949 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960); Marjorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite*, The Norton library (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963); Philip P. Wiener, ed., *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, 5 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973); Maryanne Cline Horowitz, ed., *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, 6 vols. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005).

iconology, as we would call it nowadays, traced the path of tradition of image content from the ancients up to now.”<sup>49</sup> This research, which seeks to trace the reception of the Hercules-Hydra images from the ancient up to the early seventeenth century in Europe, mainly in England, owes much to rare and precious primary sources at the Warburg Institute Library. The Library allowed the combination of resources and sources to set *Coriolanus* in the frame we use. Iconology and the history of ideas are powerful tools to analyse the Hercules-Hydra representations because they can clarify the background of the dyad, whose investigation directly lead us to deeper understanding of *Coriolanus*.

Sustained focus on the question of Hercules and Hydra acts as a powerful magnifying glass through which to examine *Coriolanus*, but its effectiveness as such a tool has been ignored, or overlooked. Thus, while some editors of *Coriolanus* have pointed out the importance of the repeated motifs of Hercules and the many-headed multitude like Hydra separately, they have paid scant attention to the connection between the two. Although the connection is clearly shown in the text, editors have surprisingly dismissed what Hercules and Hydra together represent. For example, one critic writes: “this allusion [to Hercules] turns into hyperbole, expressing superfluity of strength” in the metaphor of the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides.<sup>50</sup> Such interpretations underestimate the importance of the Hercules-Hydra representations. This underestimation is probably based upon a preconceived notion that the Herculean hero and the Hydra-headed multitude

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<sup>49</sup> Martin Warnke, “‘God Is in the Details,’ or The Filing Box Answers,” *Imagery in the 21st Century*, eds. Oliver Grau and Thomas Veigl (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011) 340. Since Hercules and Hydra are mythic figures, it could be thought that mythic criticism might be a strong tool to examine these representations; but this approach is not appropriate for our discussion because it focuses on universal concepts such as archetype and symbol. See, for example, Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957). New historicism, for its part, tends to be ideological, whereas this thesis seeks simply to interpret *Coriolanus* from different angles which have hardly been examined by Shakespeareans.

<sup>50</sup> See the note on 4.6.100-01, Philip Brockbank, ed., *Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare, 2nd Series (London: Methuen, 1976).

were only clichés in the English Renaissance. This misses the power of the story during the Renaissance—a power perhaps made greater by the way Renaissance Humanism rediscovered Hercules and Hydra after a long neglect during the Middle Ages.<sup>51</sup>

*Coriolanus* and other texts indicate that this force extended into 17th century England.

Hercules and Hydra became important symbols for Renaissance Humanism. As Jean Seznec asserts in his *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, “we can speak of a Renaissance from the day Hercules resumed his athletic breadth of shoulder, his club, and his lion’s skin.”<sup>52</sup>

In Florence, where Renaissance Humanism was born, “the great Chancellor of the Republic, Coluccio Salutati, proposed Hercules, the hero who defeats the monster and tames the nature, as the ideal of free humanity” in his *De laboribus Herculis*, in which Salutati restored the classical sense for Hercules; and Hercules became a symbol of the Florentine Republic.<sup>53</sup> As both Seznec and Garin point out, Renaissance Humanists rediscovered Hercules, and gave back the original characters of antiquity to the hero, while people in the Middle Ages were indifferent to Hercules’ original background; the medieval Hercules was “transfigured into Christ and a knight” without any relationship to his mythical background.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller characterises Humanism as follows: “The most characteristic and most pervasive aspect of the Italian Renaissance in the field of learning is the humanistic movement. . . . By humanism we mean merely the general tendency of the age to attach the greatest importance to classical studies, and to consider classical antiquity as the common standard and model by which to guide all cultural activities.” See Paul Oskar Kristeller, “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance,” *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains*, new ed., Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961) 95.

<sup>52</sup> Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*, trans. Barbara F. Sessions, Bollingen Series 38 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953) 211.

<sup>53</sup> Eugenio Garin, *L’educazione in Europa, 1400-1600: Problemi e programmi*, 2nd ed., Biblioteca di cultura moderna 521 (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1966) 81, 91. See Coluccio Salutati, *De laboribus Herculis*, ed. B. L. Ullman, 2 vols. (Zürich: Thesaurus mundi, 1951).

<sup>54</sup> Garin 91. However, there were exceptions. For instance, Hercules was embroidered on a mantle of Henry II, Holy Roman Emperor, in the Middle Ages. He “appears as the hero of an astral myth” on the mantle. See Fritz Saxl, “The Belief in Stars in the Twelfth Century,” *Lectures*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1957) 87, plates 49 and 50.

On the other hand, as for Hydra, the expression “many-headed multitude” as compared to Hydra was a platitude when *Coriolanus* was written, as Shakespeare described the people as “the blunt monster with uncounted heads, / The still-discordant wav’ing multitude” in the Induction of 2 *Henry IV* (18-9). However, every cliché is not a cliché from its outset, and, in any case, a cliché can be powerful. What might seem to us to be a “stock” phrase hides, and also encompasses, the Humanistic tradition, thus its investigation will show us many possibilities of various interpretations of *Coriolanus*. The Hercules and Hydra representations and the connection between the two have sociological, historical, iconological, political, and religious significance which should be acknowledged. They demand close examination and analysis because it is no exaggeration to say that these matters were at the core of European Humanistic thought during the Renaissance.

That insufficient research has left room for further study on the dyad is shown, for example, by the fact that Coluccio Salutati’s *De laboribus Herculis* has not been translated from Latin into modern European languages, even though Salutati, the great Chancellor of the Florentine Republic, was one of the most significant Humanists in the early Italian Renaissance.<sup>55</sup> As the return to the classical roots, and the rediscovery and restoration of antiquity, were the watchwords of Humanism, the return to the roots of the Hercules-Hydra representations which the Renaissance readers encountered mainly in Ovid, and the rediscovery and restoration of them may be adopted as our watchwords in this thesis. The reason why we choose Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* as an object of investigation is that we can identify Humanistic traces, which are crucial components in the play, by looking

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<sup>55</sup> On Salutati and his *De laboribus Herculis*, see Margherita Morreale, “Coluccio Salutati’s *De laboribus Herculis* (1406) and Enrique de Villena’s *Los doze trabajos de Hercules* (1417),” *Studies in Philology* 51 (1954) 95-106; Berthold Louis Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati*, *Medioevo e umanesimo* 4 (Padova: Antenore, 1963); Ronald G. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works, and Thought of Coluccio Salutati*, *Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983).

through the lens of the Hercules-Hydra representations.

In order to trace the Humanistic roots a legitimate starting point is to look back to the history of criticism on Hercules and Hydra. First, we have to trace the steps of our predecessors on the topic of the two mythical figures. For the images of Hercules, the following studies are useful: Malcolm Bull's Chapter 3, "Hercules," in his *The Mirror of the Gods* in 2005; Karl Galinsky's *The Herakles Theme: The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century* in 1972; Erwin Panofsky's *Hercules am Scheidewege* (Hercules at the Crossroad) in 1930; and Compton Rees, Jr's doctoral dissertation, *The Hercules Myth in Renaissance Poetry and Prose* in 1962.<sup>56</sup> The comprehensiveness of their researches greatly facilitates our analysis of Hercules.

Malcolm Bull's study provides a new point of view on Renaissance mythology, and enumerates the important representations of Hercules almost exhaustively, but his discussion does not open a perspective on the intellectual history behind the mythical hero. Panofsky adopts an iconographic approach to elucidate this intellectual history, but his focus is almost entirely limited to the topic of "the Choice of Hercules" or "Hercules at the Crossroad," in which Hercules was confronted with the choice between virtue and vice. Nevertheless, the iconographic approach of critics such as Panofsky, Gombrich, and Yates of the Warburg School should not be treated lightly, because their approach remains highly effective even today. The scope of Karl Galinsky's interest in Hercules is also too extensive for our purpose. Compton Rees' more focused range in his study on the

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<sup>56</sup> Chapter 3, "Hercules," in Malcolm Bull, *The Mirror of the Gods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 86-140; G. Karl Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme: The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972); Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst mit einem Nachwort zur Neuauflage von Dieter Wuttke*. There is no English translation for this book, but is French translation: Erwin Panofsky, *Hercule à la croisée des chemins: et autres matériaux figuratifs de l'Antiquité dans l'art plus récent*, trans. Danièle Cohn, *Idées et recherches* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999). Compton Rees, Jr., *The Hercules Myth in Renaissance Poetry and Prose*, Diss. Rice University, 1962 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1962).

intellectual background of Hercules in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Europe is more helpful.

As to the study on Hydra, in 2001, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, their *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, discussed the conflict between the establishment and the ruled in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century East Indies Companies and Virginia Company from a position of postcolonial criticism.<sup>57</sup> They present the rulers, such as governments and companies, as Hercules, and compare the ruled, such as sailors, artisans, farmers, and smallholders, to a many-headed Hydra which sought to defy the establishment. However, the focus of their debate is on the colonial world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not on the origins of the images and symbols of Hercules and Hydra themselves. These origins are historically, iconologically, politically, sociologically, and religiously problematic. Marilyn McKee Ewing's painstaking doctoral dissertation, *Hydras of Discourse: The Uses of the Hydra in English Renaissance Literature* in 1982 has been of great help in tracing these origins.<sup>58</sup> She gives an excellent list of the portrayals of Hydra in English Renaissance literature, on which the thesis draws, such as Edmund Spenser and Shakespeare, but, regrettably, she has little discussion of what the wider symbolic significance is in the interdependent intellectual movements of the European Renaissance.

This thesis adopts the following procedure. Two questions on Hercules and Hydra are examined systematically: "What exactly did Hercules or Hydra represent in the Renaissance?"; and "Why did Shakespeare use the imagery?" We have to consider the

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<sup>57</sup> Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (London: Verso, 2000).

<sup>58</sup> Marilyn McKee Ewing, *Hydras of Discourse: The Uses of the Hydra in English Renaissance Literature*, Diss. University of Colorado at Boulder, 1982 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982).

points at issue analytically because the answers are not as simple as one might expect. We start from Hydra representations in Chapter 1, although we sometimes analyse Hercules and Hydra simultaneously in view of their close connection. As we have seen, Hydra was compared to the many-headed multitude, and there are two main sources for this metaphor: (a) those based upon intellectual history from Plato to Erasmus; (b) topical or societal sources. The first sources reflect views of the many-headed multitude by ancient philosophers and poets such as Plato and Horace; and Erasmus reintroduced them in the Renaissance. The second sources are connected to the actual fickle and violent multitude in the real world at that particular time: the descriptions of the many-headed multitude in *Coriolanus* could possibly be attributed to the actual multitude who raised rebellions against enclosures in Oxfordshire in 1597 and in the Midlands around 1607 to 1608, as well as food riots in the bitterly cold winter of 1607 to 1608 with its severe frost.<sup>59</sup> These two sources will be scrutinised in Chapter 1, by explicating the Humanistic tradition, and from a topical and societal point of view.

Chapters 2 to 4 will deal with problems concerning Hercules. As Chapter 1 will reveal, representations of Hydra were extremely Humanistic, and so were Herculean ones. In the European Renaissance, many monarchs compared themselves to Hercules. This fact is well-known, but the reasons for it have not been fully explained. “Virtue” and “eloquence” were indispensable to sovereign acts in their countries, and the monarchs

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<sup>59</sup> Wells and Taylor, eds., *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* 1087. On the topicalities of the play, see Sidney Shanker, “Some Clues for *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Association Bulletin* 24 (1949) 209-13; E. C. Pettet, “*Coriolanus* and the Midlands Insurrection of 1607,” *Shakespeare Survey* 3 (1950) 34-42; Arthur Riss, “The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language,” *ELH* 59.1 (1992) 53-75; Shannon Miller, “Topicality and Subversion in William Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 32.2 (1992) 295-98; David George, “Plutarch, Insurrection, and Dearth in *Coriolanus*,” *Shakespeare Survey* 53 (2000) 60-72; Steve Hindle, “Imagining Insurrection in Seventeenth-Century England: Representations of the Midland Rising of 1607,” *History Workshop Journal* 66.1 (2008) 21-61; Muir 145.



thought that the “virtuous” and “eloquent” Hercules provided an ideal model for them.

Cominius praises Coriolanus’ “valour” and “virtue,” like those of a demigod: if “valour is the chiefest virtue,” “The man I speak of cannot in the world / Be singly counterpoised” (2.2.84-87); moreover, Volumnia says to her son Coriolanus, “Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour, / To imitate the graces of the gods” (5.3.150-51).

Coriolanus who tries to rule the plebeians or the many-headed multitude is, in this sense, Herculean. “Virtue” seems to be a commonplace concept, but the word took on a more political connotation in the Renaissance, when Machiavelli elaborated a pivotally realpolitik concept “virtù” or “virtú” in Italian in his *The Prince*: the meaning of “virtue” had started to change from medieval moralistic “virtue” to Renaissance strategic “virtù.” It can be said that Hercules embodies the new politics of the age. The eloquent Hercules is based upon the discourse of the European Renaissance Humanists, who derived the image from both Petrarch as a father of the Renaissance and Lucian translated by Erasmus.<sup>60</sup> Hercules had been frequently associated with a virtuous and eloquent king, notably in humanistic books like Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier*, dealing with the education of a prince. The speech of Coriolanus who compares the Roman citizens to “Hydra” is a good instance of Herculean eloquence and anger (3.1.93-110), and the repeated motif of “tongue” and “mouth” is relevant to the eloquent Hercules. An image of Hercules as orator is shown, for example, in Alciato’s emblem books, published in many European countries (Figs. 0.5 and 0.6):

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<sup>60</sup> Kristeller, “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance” 95: “the meaning and origin of . . . humanistic movement . . . is commonly associated with the name of Petrarch.”



Fig. 0.5. “The Gallic Hercules,” in Andrea Alciato’s *Emblemata*, Augsburg, 1531.<sup>61</sup>

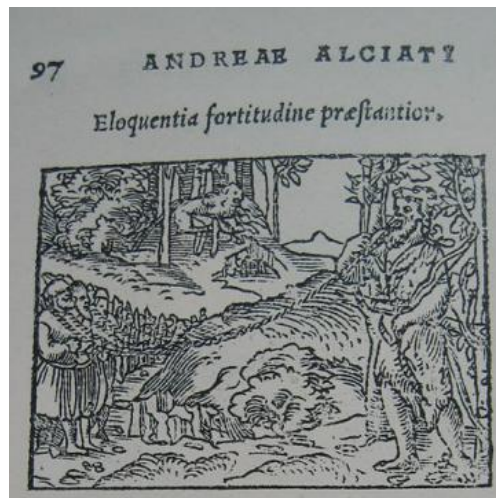


Fig. 0.6. “The Gallic Hercules,” in Andrea Alciato’s *Emblemata*, Paris, 1534.<sup>62</sup>

In these woodcuts, Hercules’ tongue is connected to the listening ears of his followers, implying that a Herculean ruler governs the people by his or her oratorical skill. We shall analyse Herculean monarchs in Europe in Chapter 2, the eloquent Hercules in Chapter 3, and the virtuous Hercules in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, our focus will shift from Herculean figures to Hydra images. The Herculean self is characterised by “virtue” and “eloquence.” However, as Shakespeare transformed Coriolanus from Hercules into a furious dragon, a kind of Hydra, we need to examine Shakespeare’s usage of the Hydra-like self. The Archbishop of Canterbury’s

<sup>61</sup> Henry Green, ed., *Andreae Alciati Emblemata fontes quatuor: Namely, an Account of the Original Collection Made at Milan, 1522, and Photo-Lith Fac-Similes of the Editions, Augsburg 1531, Paris 1534, and Venice 1546*, The Holbein Society’s Facsimile Reprints 4 (Manchester: A. Brothers, 1870) n. pag.

<sup>62</sup> Green 97.

lines in *Henry V* will aid us in the discussion. He points out that young Prince Hal led a riotous life, but his lifestyle radically improved on his ascent to the throne after the death of his father, Henry IV: “Never came reformation in a *flood*, / With such a heady currance, scouring faults; / Nor never *Hydra-headed wilfulness* / So soon did lose his seat—and all at once— / As in this king” (1.1.34-38: emphasis added). Many scholars comment that the italicised word “flood” alludes not to Noah’s Flood but to the Augean stables cleansed by Hercules who used a flood in his fifth labour.<sup>63</sup> As the virtuous Hercules cleaned the Augean stables, symbolising vice, by a flood, Henry V purged his evil mind. The following word “Hydra-headed” makes it clear that Shakespeare had the mythical image of Hercules and Hydra in mind whilst writing the play. Moreover, Hydra was a symbol of changeability: “Magis varius quam hydra (As variable as the hydra).”<sup>64</sup> The collocation of “Hydra-headed” and “wilfulness,” therefore, is significant; the epithet “Hydra” is closely connected with characters’ flexible selves and identities in Shakespeare’s works. Many characters such as Prince Hal and Hamlet perform a wide range of roles; their histrionic actions are sometimes sincere and sometimes deceptive. There is no doubt that the “Hydra-headed” Prince Hal who finally betrayed Falstaff was a good actor. Just as Hydra changed its appearance every time Hercules cut off the heads, so, similarly, Shakespeare’s characters flexibly change themselves. Interestingly, the “Hydra-headed” self is also an

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<sup>63</sup> Andrew Gurr, ed., *King Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, rep. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Gary Taylor, ed., *Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The Oxford Shakespeare, rep. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); T. W. Craik, ed., *King Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd Series (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 2001).

<sup>64</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, I i 1 to I v 100*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips and R.A.B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 137, I i 95. The usual translation of “Magis varius quam hydra” would be “More variable than the hydra.” Phillips and Mynors might have opted for “As variable as the hydra” because this sounds more colloquial or conversational, when referring to an individual. In the *Adages* volume the previous phrase, “Cothurno versatilior” is translated, “As versatile as a buskin,” where again the normal translation of the comparative adjective would be “more versatile than.”

exemplification or epitome of the spirit of the Renaissance and the Reformation, as the following woodcut of Martin Luther, which we will analyse in Chapter 5, shows (Fig. 0.7):



Fig. 0.7. *Septiceps Lutherus (The Seven-Headed Luther)*, Engraved by Hans Brosamer, 1529.<sup>65</sup>

In the woodcut Luther was compared to the Hydra-like seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse. The seven heads represent roles assigned to Luther, and each head burlesques his social images, which were widely circulated by Luther's various portraits: each of the seven heads expresses a different face of Luther. The woodcut was produced by the Catholic Church, which criticised Luther. After Chapter 5, finally, we shall reconsider *Coriolanus* in the Conclusion, summarising the discussions on the representations of Hercules and Hydra.

<sup>65</sup> Johannes Cochlaeus, *Septiceps Lutherus: ubiq[ue] sibi, suis scriptis, co[n]trariis, in Visitatione[m] Saxonica[m], per D. D. Joan. Cochlaeum, aeditus* (Lypsiae: Schumann, 1529) title page. The courtesy of die Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek.  
<<http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10167332-0>>

## Chapter 1

### Humanistic Representations of Hydra

This chapter examines the history of the expressions “many-headed multitude” or “Hydra-headed multitude” and the ideas associated with them from 380 BC to 1608.

While the changing conditions of Tudor and Stuart England, which will be explored later in this chapter, may have affected how Shakespeare and his audience thought about Hydra, in order to understand the power and symbolism of the topic we need to investigate its role in Renaissance thought and, specifically, how it passed into English writing. This chapter, therefore, traces a specific genealogy of the expression generated by the rediscovery of Hercules and Hydra by European Renaissance Humanists after a long period of neglect during the Middle Ages. The genealogy of the stock phrase, “the many-headed multitude” reveals that the usages of the phrase in *Coriolanus* were deeply influenced by Renaissance thought in general, which suggests much about what the expression might have conveyed not only to Shakespeare but also to his audience. Other scholars have seen the breadth of the use, but this thesis explores the depth, and in doing so discloses more about the likely reasons for its wide use. In this account we will see that the popular use was mainly attributed to Humanism, and because of the contingencies of the contemporary literary and visual culture, the phrase has various specific meanings or implications.

Clearly, even in Tudor England, the Hydra was already a cliché. Its wide circulation is apparently recognised in one of Shakespeare’s uses of the phrase in



text in the translation of Florio. As Peter Burke points out about “the reception of books (translations in particular),” “[t]he less faithful the translations, the more valuable they are, in the sense of offering more evidence about the process by which. . . texts. . . were adapted to the needs and expectations of foreign readers.”<sup>2</sup> Montaigne wrote about a rebellion against the Duke of Burgundy:

Ces deux arresterent la premiere tempeste, ramenant cette tourbe esmeue en la maison de ville, pour ouyr leur charge, et y deliberer. La deliberation fut courte: Voicy desbonder un second orage, autant animé que l’autre. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Charles Cotton, whose “translation of 1685 is stylistically much closer to the [Montaigne’s French] original, and much more certain in its interpretation of Montaigne’s actual meaning,” translated these sentences into English as follows<sup>4</sup>:

These two (citizens) diverted the first tempest, carrying back the enraged rabble to the town-hall to hear and consider of what they had to say. The deliberation was short; a second storm arose as violent as the other. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, Florio translated this passage as follows:

These two stayed the first approaching storme, and carryed this incensed *Hydra-headed-monster* multitude backe to the townehouse, to heare their charge, and accordingly to determine of it. The conclusion was short; when

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Burke, *The Renaissance*, 2nd ed., Studies in European History (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 1997) 33. See also, Michael Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England: A Cultural Politics of Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 1: “translation also comes to describe in an increasingly suggestive manner the various modes of cultural transmission which constituted a central dimension of early modernity. . . . Translation is as well a process that re-situates the cultural phenomena of a period variously demarcated.” Susan Sontag also remarks, “Translating, which is. . . seen as an activity of choosing in the larger sense, was a profession of individuals who were the bearers of a certain inward culture.” See Susan Sontag, “The World as India: Translation as a Passport within the Community of Literature,” *The Times Literary Supplement*, 13 June (2003): 13.

<sup>3</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Les essais*, eds. Jean Balsamo, et al., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 14 (Paris: Gallimard, 2007) 873. See also, Michel de Montaigne, *Les essais*, eds. Pierre Villey and Verdun L. Saulnier, 2nd ed., vol. 3, 3 vols. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1992) 832.

<sup>4</sup> J. M. Cohen, ed., Introduction, *Essays*, by Michel de Montaigne, trans. J. M. Cohen (London: Penguin Books, 1958) 21.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Cotton, trans., *Essays of Montaigne*, by Michel de Montaigne, ed. W. Carew Hazlitt, vol. 3, 3 vols. (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1913) 50.

loe a second tempest came rushing on. . . . (emphasis added)<sup>6</sup>

Why did Florio embellish “cette tourbe esmeuë (the enraged rabble)” with the adjective “Hydra-headed-monster”? We can speculate that it was because Florio had in mind the experience of social unrest in Elizabethan England. As Shakespeare himself indicates, the phrase, “the many-headed multitude” or “Hydra-headed-monster,” frequently appeared in print at that time, and it was connected with social disorders produced by the violent multitude in Tudor and early Stuart England. The social unrest might well be a cause of the frequent appearances of the phrase.

If Tudor and early Stuart England knew unsettled periods, the reasons were rapid population growth, spiralling prices, impoverishment, and crime. Some scholars think that Tudor and early Stuart society was unstable, and similar to the Hydra, two of whose heads grew back each time Hercules knocked off a head. A. L. Beier states that “vagabondage was *a hydra-headed monster* poised to destroy the state and social order” (emphasis added), and Christopher Hill has an essay titled, “The Many-Headed Monster in Late Tudor and Early Stuart Political Thinking.”<sup>7</sup> As Barrett L. Beer reminds us, before historians started to pay attention to “the role of rebellion in the political, social, and religious life of sixteenth-century England,” “the majority of historians preferred to portray the century as an era of law and order in which a strong but popular monarchy ruled over

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<sup>6</sup> John Florio, trans., *The Essayes of Michael Lord of Montaigne*, by Michel de Montaigne, Everyman’s Library: Essays and Belles Lettres, rep. ed., vol. 3, 3 vols. (London: Dent, 1921) 52, bk. 3, ch. 4; Michel de Montaigne, *The essayes or morall, politike and millitarie discourses of Lo: Michaell de Montaigne, Knight of the noble Order of St. Michaell, and one of the gentlemen in ordinary of the French king, Henry the third his chamber. The first booke. First written by him in French. And now done into English by him that hath inviolably vowed his labors to the aeternitie of their honors, whose names he hath severally inscribed on these his consecrated altares. . . . Iohn Florio*, trans. John Florio, STC (2nd ed.): 18041 (London: Edward Blount, 1603) 500.

<sup>7</sup> A. L. Beier, *Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640* (London: Methuen, 1985) 4; Christopher Hill, “The Many-Headed Monster in Late Tudor and Early Stuart Political Thinking,” *From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation: Essays in Honour of Garrett Mattingly*, ed. Charles H. Carter (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965) 296-324.



grateful and largely obedient subjects.”<sup>8</sup> Now, many historians insist on the social instability of the Shakespearean age.<sup>9</sup>

However, even if Florio and Shakespeare, who experienced the social disorder, used the phrase, “the many-headed multitude” or “Hydra-headed-monster,” it is clear that the phrase preceded the social conditions. Where, then, did the stock phrase come from? It originated from Renaissance Humanism—and Florio himself performed an important part in introducing Italian Renaissance Humanism to England.

Florio’s Humanistic bent may be explained by his roots. John Florio was born in London in 1553 as the son of an Italian Protestant refugee, Michael Angelo Florio who was born in Florence or Siena. Michael Angelo, Reformed minister, taught Lady Jane Grey and perhaps Princess Elizabeth Italian at court, but he and his one-year-old son John were forced to leave England to go to Strasbourg in France with his family in the reign of the Catholic Mary Tudor.<sup>10</sup> John remained on the Continent until probably 1576, and

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<sup>8</sup> Barrett L. Beer, “John Stow and Tudor Rebellions, 1549-1569,” *Journal of British Studies* 27.4 (1988) 352.

<sup>9</sup> Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (London: Temple Smith, 1972); Roger B. Manning, “Violence and Social Conflict in Mid-Tudor Rebellions,” *Journal of British Studies* 16.2 (1977) 18-40; Buchanan Sharp, *In Contempt of All Authority: Rural Artisans and Riot in the West of England, 1586-1660* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Robert L. Woods, Jr., “Individuals in the Rioting Crowd: A New Approach,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 14.1 (1983) 1-14; David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Roger B. Manning, *Village Revolts: Social Protest and Popular Disturbances in England 1509-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988); Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 4th ed., Seminar Studies in History (London: Longman, 1997). For example, Ian Archer refers to the unstable society in London as follows on pp. 4-7. In June 1595, one thousand London apprentices held a demonstration parade on Tower Hill, “intending to ransack gunmakers’ shops, and then stoned the City’s officers who had been sent to pacify them.” In 1581 apprentices and the servingmen of Sir Thomas Stanhope in Smithfield were involved in a brawl, and a brewer called Thomas Butcher “was accused of inciting the apprentices ‘to make a rebellion against the gentlemen & servingmen.’” A series of similar disturbances were also recorded in June 1584. Moreover, “three brawls on two successive days outside the Curtain Theatre escalated into riots, two of them apparently involving 500 and 1000 people respectively; apprentices conspired to rescue their imprisoned fellows; and the disturbances ended with attacks on the Inns of Court”; “The well-known riots against Lincoln’s Inn in 1590 probably had their origins in similar tensions.”

<sup>10</sup> Owe Boersma, “Florio, Michael Angelo (d. 1566x71),” 2004, Oxford University Press, 27 Feb. 2008 <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk:80/view/article/9759>>; Jason Lawrence, “Who

acquired a Humanistic education there. After he returned to London, he exploited his Humanistic education to the full, and became a “teacher, translator, writer, interpreter, grammarian, and paroemiologist, with his excellent language skills.”<sup>11</sup> He wrote Italian textbooks named *Firste Frutes* in 1578 and *Second Frutes* in 1591, compiled some Italian dictionaries, and translated Boccaccio’s *Decameron* into English. Moreover, he was favoured with the friendship of Giordano Bruno, the famous Italian theologian and Renaissance man of letters.<sup>12</sup> Desmond O’Connor speaks of “a knowledge of the Italian language, which in Elizabethan England was considered an essential gateway to Renaissance culture,” and states that “Florio offered the Elizabethans a vehicle for discovering Italy, its language, and its Renaissance culture without necessarily travelling to the continent.” On the influence of Michael Angelo and John in disseminating Italian Humanism across England, Frances A. Yates writes: “By inculcating a taste for Italian language and culture in pupils whose exalted rank made them the leaders of the nation, father and son did much to plant in England those Italian influences which helped to mould the English Renaissance.”<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, then, John Florio’s career suggests that the expression “Hydra-headed-monster” added in his translation was a product of his Humanistic education.

In addition to the Humanistic sources of the Hydra image, a topical source should be examined. The Florios went to Strasbourg in France to escape the religious persecution,

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*the Devil Taught Thee so much Italian?”: Italian Language Learning and Literary Imitation in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) 6.

<sup>11</sup> Desmond O’Connor, “Florio, John (1553-1625),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, Oxford University Press, 3 Nov. 2006 <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk:80/view/article/9758>>. See also Lawrence, 1-61.

<sup>12</sup> See O’Connor. See also Yates, *John Florio* 87-123; Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England* 157-254.

<sup>13</sup> Yates, *John Florio* 8-9.

and then they moved to Switzerland, where his father Michael Angelo Florio was invited to minister to the Reformed congregation in a tiny village.<sup>14</sup> Needless to say, Switzerland was the centre of the Reformation and the base of the Frenchman John Calvin; it is not difficult to imagine that Florio became acquainted with many Huguenots in France and Switzerland. In France, interestingly, the Huguenots were compared with the many-headed Hydra, as we will see in later chapters; thus there is a possibility that the representation of the Hydra-like multitude by Florio was affected by this religious background.

Florio's use of the Hydra shows that the expression was ready to hand in Protestant thought on rebellion. In his *The Art of Rhetoric* (1560) the English Humanist and statesman, Thomas Wilson, referring to Horace, remarks that educational "feigned fables" endow the multitude who "is a beast, or rather a monster that hath many heads" with "wisdom."<sup>15</sup> As Peter E. Medine says, the publication history indicates that Wilson's *The Art of Rhetoric* was "one of the most successful sixteenth-century books of its kind in England," and "contemporary comments suggest its wide influence."<sup>16</sup> For example, Gabriel Harvey emphasises that the book is the "dailie bread of our common pleaders, & discourses."<sup>17</sup> In this influential book we find both the circulation of the famous Horatian phrase, "many-headed multitude" in England, and a reflection on the significance of fables. Thus, on the same page on which he quoted the Horatian expression, Thomas Wilson

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<sup>14</sup> See O'Connor.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric* (1560), ed. Peter E. Medine (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994) 221-22.

<sup>16</sup> Peter E. Medine, *Introduction, The Art of Rhetoric* (1560) (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994) 9. For the influence of Thomas Wilson on Tudor prose style, see Janel M. Mueller, *The Native Tongue and the Word: Developments in English Prose Style 1380-1580* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984) 346-72.

<sup>17</sup> Virginia F. Stern, *Gabriel Harvey: His Life, Marginalia and Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) 239.

stresses the importance of fables:

Undoubtedly fables well set forth have done much good at divers times and in divers commonweals. The Roman Menenius Agrippa, alleging upon a time a fable of the conflict made betwixt the parts of a man's body and his belly, quieted a marvelous stir that was like to ensue and pacified the uproar of seditious rebels, which else thought forever to destroy their country.<sup>18</sup>

This citation refers to Menenius' fable, told to pacify the angry multitude in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (1.1.94-153), which starts like this: "There was a time when all the body's members, / Rebelled against the belly, thus accused it." This belly fable is mentioned in Thomas North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* which Shakespeare used as a source of *Coriolanus*, but the Horatian phrase does not appear in that translation.<sup>19</sup> Both Wilson and Shakespeare, using the same fable, share a view that the multitude "is a beast, or rather a monster that hath many heads"—a telling coincidence.

More significant, though, is the attitude of both writers to fables. Both writers seem to have subscribed to a view of the people as "rude and ignorant"; certainly each regarded fable as a key mode of communication with the multitude.<sup>20</sup> Wilson's statement that the "fable of the conflict made betwixt the parts of a man's body and his belly, quieted a marvelous stir" implies that fables were useful to enlighten, or at least control, the people.

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<sup>18</sup> Wilson 222.

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Coriolanus, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, the Roman Plays: Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus*, vol. 5, 8 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) 510, 551-52. While many English authors referred to the belly fable which was a commonplace, the expression "the many-headed multitude" is not found in proximity to the fable in their works. See, Kenneth Muir, *Shakespeare's Sources I: Comedies and Tragedies*, rep. ed. (London: Methuen, 1961) 223-24; Paul Archambault, "The Analogy of the 'Body' in Renaissance Political Literature," *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance* 29 (1967) 21-53; David G. Hale, *The Body Politic: A Political Metaphor in Renaissance English Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971) 96-107; Leonard Barkan, *Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975) 95-108; Arthur Riss, "The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language," *ELH* 59.1 (1992) 53-75; Zvi Jagendorf, "*Coriolanus*: Body Politic and Private Parts," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41 (1990) 455-69; Delphine Lemonnier-Texier, "The Analogy of the Body Politic in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*: From the Organic Metaphor of Society to the Monstrous Body of the Multitude," *Moreana* 43, nos. 168-70 (2006) 107-31.

<sup>20</sup> Wilson 221.

Hydra partakes of the quality of fable. So, in Wilson we find “the uproar of seditious rebels” to be the uproar of “a monster that hath many heads.” This representation of the multitude was attributed to the Roman poet Horace, whose phrase undoubtedly referred to the Greek myth of Hydra, since Horace knew the monster and he mentioned it in his *Odes* and *Epistles*.<sup>21</sup>

The influence of Horace on this strand of thinking was substantial. As Thomas Whitfield Baldwin demonstrates in his two-volume book *William Shakspeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, the English in the Renaissance could read in school Hesiod, Homer, Sophocles, Plato, Seneca as well as Plutarch, Ovid, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Horace's *Epistles* and *Satires*, which were published in English translation in the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, Tudor people must have known not only Plato's description of the multitude as a “great strong beast” in the *Republic*, but also Horace's “belua multorum es capitum” (“You [the people of Rome] are a many-headed monster-thing”) in his *Epistles*. This echoes Virgil's “Lernaes turba capitum circumstetit anguis” (“Lerna's snake encompassed you with its swarm of heads”) in the *Aeneid*.<sup>23</sup> Marilyn McKee Ewing argues that Horace seems to be the first writer who uses Hydra “in a political context,” but it is not important for us to verify her hypothesis here.<sup>24</sup> The important thing is that the *humanist* Thomas Wilson knew Horace and cited the epistle in his highly influential book.

Moving from England to the Continent, we note that Horace's image of the

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<sup>21</sup> Horace, *Odes*, trans. Niall Rudd, *Odes and Epodes*, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004) 4.4.61; Horace, *Epistles*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, *Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica*, rev. ed., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1929) 1.1.76, 2.1.10.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Whitfield Baldwin, *William Shakspeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, 2 vols. (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, The Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1935) 4.493-b; Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999-2000) 8.300; Horace, *Epistles* 1.1.76.

<sup>24</sup> Marilyn McKee Ewing, *Hydras of Discourse: The Uses of the Hydra in English Renaissance Literature*, Diss. University of Colorado at Boulder, 1982 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982) 11.

many-headed multitude, well known to the Humanists, was especially popularised by Desiderius Erasmus.<sup>25</sup> According to E. J. Devereux, the 195 books of Erasmus were published in English from 1524 to 1700.<sup>26</sup> Tudor translators lavished praise on Erasmus. For example, Gentian Hervet, who translated Erasmus's *De immensa dei misericordia* in 1525, described Erasmus as "the man to whom in lerning no liuyng man may hym selfe compare" in the preface<sup>27</sup>; Wolfgang Capito, German Protestant reformer, called Erasmus "the most excellent clerke Erasmus"<sup>28</sup>; and Nicholas Udall, translator, scholar, preacher or playwright, depicted Erasmus as "the moste famous clerke and moste godly writer Erasmus of Roterodom" in the dedication to Katherine Parr, the last wife of King Henry VIII; Erasmus was compared with a god in Tudor England.<sup>29</sup> Roland H. Bainton, biographer of Erasmus, says that "England was the land where the influence of Erasmus was paramount."<sup>30</sup>

In his works Erasmus frequently mentions "the many-headed multitude like Hydra." For example, he refers to peasants as a Hydra in a letter to Thomas Lupset, ecclesiastic and scholar, in 1525:

<sup>25</sup> Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380-1620*, Oxford-Warburg Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 76: Erasmus "rose from unpromising beginnings to become the most publicly prominent European intellectual of the early sixteenth century"; Eugenio Garin, *L'educazione in Europa, 1400-1600: Problemi e programmi*, 2nd ed., Biblioteca di cultura moderna 521 (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1966) 148: "the influence of Erasmus was decisive and almost incalculable". See also the French translation of the book, Eugenio Garin, *L'Éducation de l'homme moderne: La pédagogie de la Renaissance 1400-1600*, trans. Jacqueline Humbert, Hachette Littératures (Paris: Fayard, 1968) 144-45.

<sup>26</sup> E. J. Devereux, *A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700*, Occasional Publication 3 (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1968). See also its enlarged version, E. J. Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus: A Bibliography to 1700* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983); Claudia Corti, *Introduction: The Famous Clerk Erasmus, Silenos: Erasmus in Elizabethan Literature*, Studi di letteratura moderne e comparate 1 (Ospedaletto, Italy: Pacini Editore, 1998) 11.

<sup>27</sup> Gentian Hervet, trans., *De immensa dei misericordia*, by Desiderius Erasmus, STC (2nd ed.):10475 (London: 1533) sigs. A2<sup>v</sup>-A3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Wolfgang Capito, *An Epitome of the Psalmes, or Briefe Meditations vpon the Same, with Diuerse Other Moste Christian Prayers*, trans. Richard Taverner, STC (2nd ed.): 2748 (London: 1539) sig. Ev<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> Nicholas Udall, trans., *The First Tome or Volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Newe Testamente*, by Desiderius Erasmus, STC (2nd ed.): 2854.5 (London: 1548) sig. AAa.ii.<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Roland H. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (New York: Scribner, 1969) 279.

Thomas Grey and his youngest son are staying with me. He tells me that nothing revolutionary is happening in England. People are restrained by fear. The peasant uprising has been settled after a fashion, but *we are dealing with a hydra*, and when one head is cut off, others grow in its place. Great efforts are being made at reform, but I see no sure prospects of peace.<sup>31</sup> (emphasis added)

Here, the peasants are compared to the formidable Hydra, difficult to exterminate. We saw above how real peasant uprisings figure in Shakespeare's thinking in *Coriolanus*, where the fictional plebeians are compared to a Hydra.<sup>32</sup>

In his *Adages*, an encyclopaedic collection of proverbs and maxims from classical sources, Erasmus connects the multitude with Hydra: "Magis varius quam hydra" ("As variable as the hydra"); and he himself annotates this adage as follows:

Spoken of the artful and wily, because Hydra is a snake with many-coloured markings. It will be neatly used against crafty people, clever at dissimulation, or people who are not consistent with themselves.<sup>33</sup>

Erasmus states that Hydra has "many-coloured markings," but this physical feature of Hydra can hardly be seen in other writers and commentators. It seems possible that this detail might, therefore, be Erasmus' misunderstanding. Nevertheless, if it is assumed that

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<sup>31</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1535-1657 (January-December 1525)*, trans. Alexander Dalzell, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 11 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994) 306. Note 9 of page 306 says about Thomas Grey: "Virtually nothing is known about him except for his occasional appearance in Erasmus' correspondence."

<sup>32</sup> In addition, just after the passages above in the same letter, Erasmus says that he is "being forced to take on the role of gladiator, or rather to enter the arena with wild beasts, to fight single-handed against a multitude," in his heated controversy with Luther on free will (though we deal with the controversy between Erasmus and Luther in Chapter 5). Erasmus likens Luther to an endlessly increasing formidable "multitude" and "wild beasts." However, these metaphors would not have been used without picturing the image of the many-headed stubborn Hydra in his mind.

<sup>33</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, I i 1 to I v 100*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips and R.A.B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 137, I i 95. On the character and growth of the *Adages*, Margaret Mann Phillips, *The "Adages" of Erasmus: A Study with Translations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) ix-xvi, 3-165. Forthcoming *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 30, will be assigned as an introductory volume of the *Adages*. The considerable influence of the *Adages* on the European intellectual scene should be stressed. See James Kelsey McConica, *Erasmus, Past Masters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 28: "There was probably no other work from Erasmus' hand which had a greater direct impact on European culture than this, nor one more difficult to trace. A glance through an index of the Adagia will reveal phrases that are still on our lips, which many would probably attribute, vaguely, to the Bible, and which almost none would know had once been put abroad in Erasmus' great compilation."

Erasmus had an image of a colour-changing chameleon in his mind, the expression, “Hydra. . . with many-coloured markings,” would be justified as an expression emphasising the fickleness of people “who are not consistent with themselves.” Indeed, Erasmus thinks that the chameleon is a symbol of changeability, and he annotated an adage on the colour-changing polyp, or, cephalopod, cuttlefish, “Polypi mentem obtine” (“Adopt the outlook of the polyp”); assuming Erasmus does mean to invoke the chameleon in relation to Hydra, we can follow up the image and find it in the following annotation:

Aristotle draws a similar metaphor from the chameleon, in his *Ethics*, book 1. . . . Pliny mentions the chameleon, book 28 chapter 8, where he. . . says, [the chameleon] is thought to be more easily frightened, and hence these changes of colour. Plutarch, in his essay “On Flattery,” writes that the chameleon imitates every colour except white.<sup>34</sup>

Since Erasmus collected the adage, “Magis varius quam hydra” (“As variable as the hydra”), the evidence suggests that he emphasised the fickleness of people by comparing them to the many-headed monster.<sup>35</sup>

It is clear from the examples above that Erasmus regarded the capricious people as

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<sup>34</sup> Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31, 135, I i 93.

<sup>35</sup> Erasmus refers to another adage about the multitude, which does not include the word “Hydra”: “Multitudo imperatorum Cariam perdidit” (“Excess of generals ruined Caria [an ancient region of southwest Asia Minor]”, in Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, II vii 1 to III iii 100*, trans. R. A. B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 34 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 6, II vii 7. Erasmus says in its annotation: “Too many generals brought Caria down” because “*polyarchia*, the rule of many, is as great an evil as the so-called *anarchia*, the rule of none”; and he thinks that the society becomes more “disastrous” when the multitude having no ability to judge obeys no one general. This adage compares the many-headed generals to be obeyed with the ignorant many-headed multitude, and Erasmus regards both of them as evil for society. Moreover, Erasmus cites a more familiar adage “Lerna malorum” (“A Lerna of troubles”), which represents “an accumulation of many ills all piled up on one another” in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31, 258, I iii 27. He gives a commentary on this adage: “The [Greek and Latin] poets claim that in this lake dwelt the famous seven-headed hydra, which Hercules destroyed with Greek fire. This hydra, as Hesiod writes, was the offspring of Echidna and Typhaon, and nourished by Juno, doubtless in hatred of Hercules.” This annotation emphasises the connection with Hercules, Hydra, and its habitat Lerna. Furthermore, in the annotation, interestingly, Erasmus cites a comparison between Hydra and theatre audiences: “In Hesychius [Greek grammarian and lexicographer of the 5th century] the [Greek] comedy-writer Cratinus [(ca.520-423 B.C.)] calls the theatre a Lerna of spectators, because it consists of the mixed and various offscourings of humanity.” See Hesiod, *The Theogony*, trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1914) 306-32.



the Horatian Hydra-headed multitude.<sup>36</sup> Erasmus makes clear in his writings what he thought about the multitude, but a pictorial illustration can here convey the Humanistic view of the multitude more clearly.

The image was drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, who was inseparably bound up with Erasmus and in sympathy with his religious position. Holbein inserted many illustrations in margins of a copy of Erasmus' *Moriae encomium* (*The Praise of Folly*) published at Basle in 1515.<sup>37</sup> This set of marginal drawings, which established Holbein's reputation at the age of seventeen, are extremely important not only because the book is a rare book, kept in the Print Room at Basle, but also because the marginal illustrations convey the Humanistic intellectual culture at that time.<sup>38</sup> In one of the book's margins, Holbein caricatured the foolish people (Fig. 1.1):

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<sup>36</sup> Erasmus tries to define a proverb in the Introduction to *Adages*, citing Donatus, a Latin grammarian, as follows: "A proverb is 'a saying which is fitted to things and times.' Diomedes however defines it as follows: 'A proverb is the taking over of a popular saying, fitted to things and times, when the words say one thing and mean another. . . . I myself think (*pace* the grammarians) that a complete definition and one suitable to our present purpose may be reached by saying: 'A proverb is a saying in popular use, remarkable for some shrewd and novel turn.'" See Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus* 31.3-4. The popularity of the phrase "many-headed multitude" was a product of both the real society and the Humanistic tradition, which we are discussing in this chapter.

<sup>37</sup> Derek Wilson, *Hans Holbein: Portrait of an Unknown Man*, rev. ed. (London: Pimlico, 2006) 31-42.

<sup>38</sup> Fritz Saxl, "Holbein and the Reformation," *Lectures*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1957) 280.



Fig. 1.1. “The Common People” Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1515.<sup>39</sup>

In order to comprehend the Humanistic usage of the “many-headed multitude,” we need to pay close attention to this illustration. This image has not hitherto been examined, but, as we shall see, repays further study; and the background is explored in the rest of this chapter. In this image, the common people are represented as a many-headed monster standing with a stick on a sphere wafting over the water. This illustration is placed beside the following section of *The Praise of Folly*, as translated into English by Sir Thomas Chaloner in 1549:

What thyng also revoked the comminaltee of Rome, rebellyng against the Senate, to agreement? was it any Philosophicall oracion? No forsouth. What than? Euin a foolisshe Aesopes fable feigned of the bealie, and the other lymmes of mans bodie. Lyke as Themistocles perswaded the Atheniens by his tale of the foxe and the hedgehogge. . . . I let passe *Minos*, and Numa, each of whom with feigned fayrie invencions bleared the *grosse multitudes eyes*: For ye must thinke that suche lyke toies as these, are the liveliest and

<sup>39</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Erasmus Roterodami Encomium moriae: i.e. Stultitiae laus, Lob der Torheit, Basler Ausgabe von 1515, mit den Randzeichnungen von Hans Holbein D. J., in Faksimile*, ed. Heinrich Alfred Schmid (Basle: Henning Oppermann Verlag, 1931) sig. F2<sup>r</sup>. The facsimile is also in Erika Betty Goodman Michael, *The Drawings by Hans Holbein the Younger for Erasmus' Praise of Folly*, A Garland Series: Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986) 385.

most pithie perswasions, that *the myghtie madbeast* the communaltee can be moved with.<sup>40</sup> (emphasis added)

The word, “Minos,” on the sphere in the illustration clearly shows the correspondence between the text of Erasmus and the drawing of Holbein. Girardus Listrius, who published the annotated edition of *Moriae encomium* in 1515, commented upon Minos:

Minos, the king of the Cretans, invented the story that every nine years he was admitted to the council chamber of Jupiter and that he brought the laws given him there to the people, so that the authority of such laws might be greater. . . .<sup>41</sup>

In short, the story of Minos functions “as an example of the foolish and arbitrary nature of lawmaking or lawgiving,” and he controlled the fickle and unstable multitude with the invented story.<sup>42</sup>

The goddess Folly in the text says that “the grosse multitudes” like “the myghtie madbeast” can be easily controlled by “a foolisshe. . . fable,” or a “story.” The fable or story that Holbein specifically associated with the whole cluster of ideas is, as we have seen, “a fable of the conflict made betwixt the parts of a man’s body and his belly,” as mentioned also by Thomas Wilson and as Menenius tells it to the Roman plebeians in *Coriolanus* (1.1.94-153).<sup>43</sup> The passages of *The Praise of Folly* which point out the effectiveness of fables in dealing with the gullible multitude suggest that the multitude and fable were regarded as a conceptual “set.” Accordingly, moreover, we can see an influence of Humanism, possibly of Erasmus, however mediated, as indicated in the writings of Thomas

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<sup>40</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folie*, trans. Thomas Chaloner, ed. Clarence H. Miller, Early English Text Society 257 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) 34-35.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Austin Gavin, *The Commentary of Gerardus Listrius on Erasmus’ Praise of Folly: A Critical Edition and Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Diss. Saint Louis University, 1973 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1973) 434. Quoted also in Michael, *The Drawings by Hans Holbein the Younger* 77.

<sup>42</sup> Michael 77.

<sup>43</sup> Wilson 222.

Wilson and William Shakespeare.<sup>44</sup>

Erasmus may indeed have been highly influential in spreading the representation of the multitude over Europe, but the examples afforded by his work alone cannot offer irrefutable proof of wide, deep, or prolonged engagement with the “idea of Hydra” in Europe or England. Let us therefore look at the place of the idea in the work of another Humanist, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim—a figure who shared with Erasmus not only theological views but also the Humanistic view of the many-headed multitude which we have explored here.

Agrippa, like Erasmus, cites representations of the fickle multitude from ancient philosophers and writers such as Plato and Horace. They are found in Chapter 55 “Of Politicke Gouvernaunce,” *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, in 1530, which was translated into English by James Sanford in 1569:

But almost every man iudgeth the government of the people to be worste. Apollonius disswadeth Uaspasiane from this with many reasons: and Cicero saith, that in the common people there is no reason, no counsaile, no difference, nor diligence, and the Poete saith:

Th’unsteadfast people severed are in sundrie mindes.

[Virg. Lib. 4. Enead]

And Othanes the Persian saithe, that there is nothinge more presumptuous, nor more foolishe then the multitude of the people: and it is the propertie of the common people to understand nothing, but to renne headlong without advise to doo their businesse, like to *a river that runneth with greate violence*. Demosthenes also calleth the people *a naughtie beaste*, and Plato nameth it *a beaste with many heades, whereof Horace maketh mention* [Epistol. 77], and Phalaris writinge to Egesippus saithe: All the people is rashe, madde, slouthfull, very readie to chaunge opinion into whatsoever shall befall, distoyall, unstedfaste, swifte, traiterous, ful of deceit, onely profitable in voice, ready, and prone to anger, and prayse: hereof it commeth that he, whiche in governinge the common wealth endevoureth to please the people, perisheth with honeste reproche. . . . Aristotle also in his Ethickes thinketh that the

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<sup>44</sup> Peter E Medine remarks that Thomas Wilson acknowledged himself to be the successor to Humanists in the Introduction of *The Art of Rhetoric* (1560) 22: Wilson “would have had to emulate his predecessors George of Trebizond, Melanchthon, and Erasmus in *De Copia*” in *The Art of Rhetoric*.

governance of the people is worste, and of one, best of all. For the common people is *the head of errours*, and mistresse of lewde customes, and a greate heape of mischiefes.<sup>45</sup> (emphasis added)

In the same Chapter 55, Agrippa analyses all three types of government: “*Monarchia* whiche is the rule of one, *Aristocratia*, whiche is of fewe, but noble, riche, or els of the chieftest, *Democratia*, which is of the people, or popolare,” and he makes a detailed explanation of democracy, referring to historical examples, all of which deplore the ignorance of the multitude.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Agrippa himself adds a sentence to portray “the multitude of the people” as “almoste continually ignoraunt,” a “many headed cruell beast.”<sup>47</sup> In short, government and the many-headed multitude are inseparable, as in *Coriolanus*. It is certainly possible that this view of the multitude derived from Erasmus, for Agrippa’s indebtedness to Erasmus was profound. They enjoyed a scholarly exchange by letters and, as Marc van der Poel states, “Erasmus’s name and the titles of his theological writings occur in Agrippa’s correspondence from the year 1518 onward. They appear in letters which illustrate Agrippa’s overall interest in theology and Church affairs.”<sup>48</sup> Howsoever the image is derived, it is its presence in Agrippa’s writings that is significant for the argument made here. These quotations from Erasmus and Agrippa exemplify the spread of the representation of the many-headed multitude among the Humanists.

In the light of Agrippa’s engagement with the image of the “many headed cruell beast” it is worth returning to Holbein’s marginal illustration. It may be more complicated

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<sup>45</sup> Henry Cornelius Agrippa, *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, ed. Catherine M. Dunn, The Renaissance Editions 7 (Northridge, CA: California State University Press, 1974) 171.

<sup>46</sup> Agrippa 168.

<sup>47</sup> Agrippa 172, 8.

<sup>48</sup> Marc van der Poel, *Cornelius Agrippa: The Humanist Theologian and His Declamations* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 155. On the network of Humanists in Tudor England, see Henry Morley, *The Life of Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim: Doctor and Knight, Commonly Known as a Magician*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1856) 226-30. It seemed that in 1510, Maximilian I, Holy Roman emperor and German king, sent Agrippa as ambassador to Henry VIII to discuss how to treat France. During the stay in England, Agrippa resided in the house of Erasmus’ friend John Colet, a distinguished Christian Humanist, with whom Agrippa studied the Epistles of Saint Paul.

than it looks, and may reveal more about how the Humanists thought of the multitude. In order to show how profoundly this illustration considers the multitude, let us look at an imitation of Holbein's picture (Fig. 1.2):

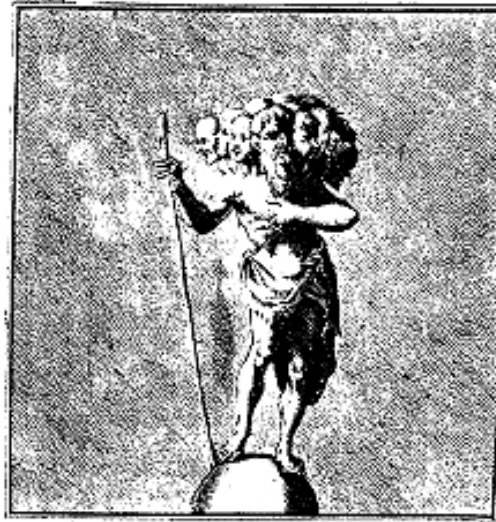


Fig. 1.2. "The Common People" Drawn by an Unidentified Artist, 1876.<sup>49</sup>

There is an interval of 361 years between the two illustrations, and Fig. 1.2 does not reproduce every feature of Holbein's illustration. Its omission of the running water under the sphere may indicate that the unidentified artist, like us, could not understand what significance was hidden in the running water. In order to comprehend the Humanistic background of the original illustration (Fig. 1.1) we need to decipher its elements step by step.

The original illustration drawn by Holbein in 1515 presents a many-headed monster standing with a stick on a sphere wafting over the water. Let us begin with the streaming water under the ball. It may remind us of the famous aphorisms known as Fragments 12 and 91a by the Greek thinker Heraclitus (540 B.C.-470 B.C.): "As they step into the same

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<sup>49</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Erasmus in Praise of Folly, Illustrated with Many Curious Cuts, Designed, Drawn, and Etched by Hans Holbein, with Portrait, Life of Erasmus, and His Epistle to Sir Thomas More* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1876) illustration between 8-9.

river, different and [still] different waters flow upon them” and “it is not possible to step twice into the same river.”<sup>50</sup> Second, the streaming water could also signify the fickleness of the multitude. Moreover, the surging waves may suggest the brutality of a violent multitude—as Agrippa says, “it is the propertie of the common people to understand nothing, but to renne headlong without advise to doo their businesse, like to a river that runneth with greate violence.”<sup>51</sup> In fact, Heinrich Bullinger, a Swiss reformer and the successor of Huldreich Zwingli, compared the multitude to water in a work which was translated into English by John Dawes [Daus] in 1561: “the comon folke or people are rightly compared to waters, whiche are also for their unstablenes called movable or unconstaunt, and for their rage both furiose and madde.”<sup>52</sup>

Clearly, this strange illustration’s most distinctive feature is the man with many heads. This significance is clarified by the way Girardus Listrius, Erasmus’ contemporary, cites Plato’s *Republic* (4.493 a-c) in his commentary on *The Praise of Folly*:

Plato says that the Sophists teach only the opinions of the mob—those things to which the crowd agrees by a sort of herd-instinct—and that they call this knowledge. . . . He says that the Sophists define everything in terms of this huge beast’s opinion, that they call whatever pleases it “good” and whatever displeases it “bad” without giving any other reason. These were Plato’s words. But it seems that there are some preachers of our own day who are not so very different from these popular Sophists. Indeed in their sermons they babble more about what they think will be pleasing to merchants and women—from whom they hope to scrape together a coin or two—than about those things that could lead the common people to holiness. Horace also, in imitation of Plato, calls the people *a many-headed beast* (*Epist.* I, 1, 76).<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Heraclitus, *Fragments: A Text and Translation with a Commentary*, trans. T. M. Robinson, Phoenix Pre-Socratics (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 16-17 (Fragment 12), 54-55 (Fragment 91a).

<sup>51</sup> Agrippa 171.

<sup>52</sup> Heinrich Bullinger, *A Hundred Sermons vpon the Apocalips of Jesu Christe*, trans. John Dawes [Daus], STC (2nd ed.): 4061 (London: 1561) fol. 524. See also C. A. Patrides, “‘The Beast with Many Heads’: Renaissance Views on the Multitude,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 16.2 (1965) 245.

<sup>53</sup> Gavin, *The Commentary of Gerardus Listrius on Erasmus’ Praise of Folly* 436. Quoted also in Michael, *The Drawings by Hans Holbein the Younger* 75. See also J. Austin Gavin and Thomas M. Walsh, “The Praise of Folly in Context: The Commentary of Girardus Listrius,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 24.2 (1971) 193-209.

(emphasis added)

It is clear that the man with many heads symbolises people's caprice. A. H. T. Levi comments upon this part of the text in a note on *The Praise of Folly*: "the gullibility of the common people is a common renaissance [sic] topos." The representation shows the multitude's lack of self-direction.<sup>54</sup>

Next, moving lower, we study the body on the ball or sphere. This figure suggests the goddess Fortune. However, before we follow up this association, we should note that the shape of the body probably has implications derived from the practices of Renaissance art. The posture of the man is called "*contrapposto*," which is a term "used in modern writing about art for the posture of a sculpted figure standing at rest with weight shifted on to one leg." This posture "appears in innumerable Greek and Roman figures as well as in Far Eastern art and in medieval 'renascences', finally to be revived and developed as part of the Neo-classicism of the Italian Renaissance."<sup>55</sup> "This system of figural articulation was . . . much exploited during the Italian Renaissance," and "Renaissance representations of the human figure are enlivened by *contrapposto*."<sup>56</sup> The unidentified artist who reproduced Holbein's original illustration in 1876 was ignorant of this artistic tradition because the nearly upright posture in the drawing of 1876 cannot be called *contrapposto*. Since this thesis deals with the genealogy of the expression "Hydra-headed multitude" in European Renaissance, we should not overlook this artistic trace of Renaissance art.

Even if, as seems possible, Holbein changed the figure on the ball from a female to a

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<sup>54</sup> A. H. T. Levi, Notes, trans. Betty Radice, *Praise of Folly and Letter to Martin Dorp, 1515*, Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) 101.

<sup>55</sup> David Summers, "Contrapposto," *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art*, ed. Gerald W. R. Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 142. See also Michael 76; David Summers, "Contrapposto: Style and Meaning in Renaissance Art," *The Art Bulletin* 59.3 (1977) 336-61.

<sup>56</sup> Martin Kemp, ed., *The Oxford History of Western Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 536; L. E. Semler, *The English Mannerist Poets and the Visual Arts* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998) 31.



male, the marginal drawing can be connected with the goddess Fortune because of elements elsewhere in the artist's work. We find that Holbein engraved Fortune standing on a ball for a printer's mark of Andreas Cratander in Basel, 1525 (Fig. 1.3):



Fig. 1.3. "The Goddess Fortune" Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1525.<sup>57</sup>

In another marginal picture for *The Praise of Folly* in 1515 Holbein put Fortune on a ball—apparently to show the absurdity and slipperiness of the goddess (Fig. 1.4)<sup>58</sup>:

<sup>57</sup> Hans Holbein the Younger, *Hans Holbein d.J.: Die Druckgraphik im Kupferstichkabinett Basel*, ed. Christian Müller (Basel: Verlag Schwabe, 1997) 196, 311.

<sup>58</sup> The representation of Fortune standing on a sphere or globe spread all over Europe, and it must have been a cliché. However, this commonplace is worth examining. Some references to the globe or wheel as attributes of Fortune appear in Latin literature, and the earliest example is probably that of Pacuvius (220 B.C.-130 B.C.), Roman tragic dramatist. "The wheel as an attribute of Fortune is of Roman origin, and together with the globe which often takes its place, signifies the inconstancy of the goddess"; in Roman art, the goddess has the wheel or globe in her hand, or lays it at her feet, and sometimes stands on the globe. See Stanley Leman Galpin, "Fortune's Wheel in the Roman De La Rose," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 24.2 (1909) 332. This image of Fortune prevailed in European countries, but it is difficult to trace its origin. Another researcher traces it to Greece: "Reference to the globe or ball of Fortuna in classical literature occurs most often in Greek authors and disappears soon after the third century B.C."; in Latin poetry he has discovered only one example, the same quotation from Pacuvius; however, references not to the globe of Fortune but to the wheel of the goddess are plentiful in the Augustan period, and "extremely so in the Middle ages and the Renaissance." See H. V. Canter, "'Fortuna' in Latin Poetry," *Studies in Philology* 19 (1922) 77. See also Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature*, rep. ed. (New York: Octagon Books, 1967) 8-14. Shakespeare himself presents the conventional concepts of the Goddess Fortune: "Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler afore her eyes, to signify to you that Fortune is blind. And she is painted also with a wheel, to signify to you—which is the moral of it—that she is turning and inconstant and mutability and variation. And her foot, look you, is fixed upon a spherical stone, which rolls, and rolls, and rolls. In good truth, the poet makes a most excellent description of it; Fortune is an excellent moral" (*Henry V*, 3.6.29-36).



Fig. 1.4. “The Goddess Fortune Favouring a Fool with Wealth” Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1515.<sup>59</sup>

In the picture, a fool stands on the seashore; he holds out his apron into which Fortune, who stands upon a ball floating in the sea, pours coins from a bag. This marginal illustration goes with Folly’s oration on Fortune, in which she says, “Fortune favoureth men not of the most forcast, and loveth bolde hazardours, suche as refuse no chaunce of the dyse.”<sup>60</sup> As Samuel C. Chew states, the notion that Fortune loves not those who are wise, but rather attends on the foolish, is “extraordinary prevalent in Elizabethan literature,” although no “classical source of the expression has been discovered.”<sup>61</sup> Obviously, this idea

<sup>59</sup> Erasmus, *Erasmus Roterodami Encomium moriae*, Heinrich Alfred Schmid ed., sig. S2<sup>v</sup>. The facsimile is also in Michael 432.

<sup>60</sup> Erasmus, *The Praise of Folie*, trans. Thomas Chaloner, 104.

<sup>61</sup> Samuel C. Chew, “Time and Fortune,” *ELH* 6.2 (1939) 100. According to Tilley and Dent, the year in which the proverb appeared for the first time in England is 1563. Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Collection of the Proverbs Found in English Literature and the Dictionaries of the Period* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950) F600: “Fortune Favors Fools”; R. W. Dent, *Proverbial Language in English Drama Exclusive of Shakespeare, 1495-1616: An Index* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) F600.

emphasises the absurdity and mutability of Fortune, and the marginal drawing embodies the fusion of the Goddess Fortune and the multitude which share the features of illogicality and slipperiness.

For the purposes of our argument we can take into account yet another representation of the instability of Fortune. Fortune is also represented as a woman with one foot resting on the land and the other on a floating globe or in the water. This is of interest to us even though Holbein's Fortune does not specifically rest one foot on the land, for this representation is found in Shakespeare as well:

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more.  
Men were deceivers ever,  
One foot in sea, and one on shore,  
To one thing constant never. (*Much Ado About Nothing* 2.3.61-64)

Shakespeare also writes about inconsistency of men's minds, but it is apparent that Shakespeare has the visual image of Fortune in mind. The following etching by Wenceslaus Hollar is another apt example of Fortune unsteadily balancing on a globe above a stormy sea, though the composition is much later than Holbein's (Fig. 1.5):

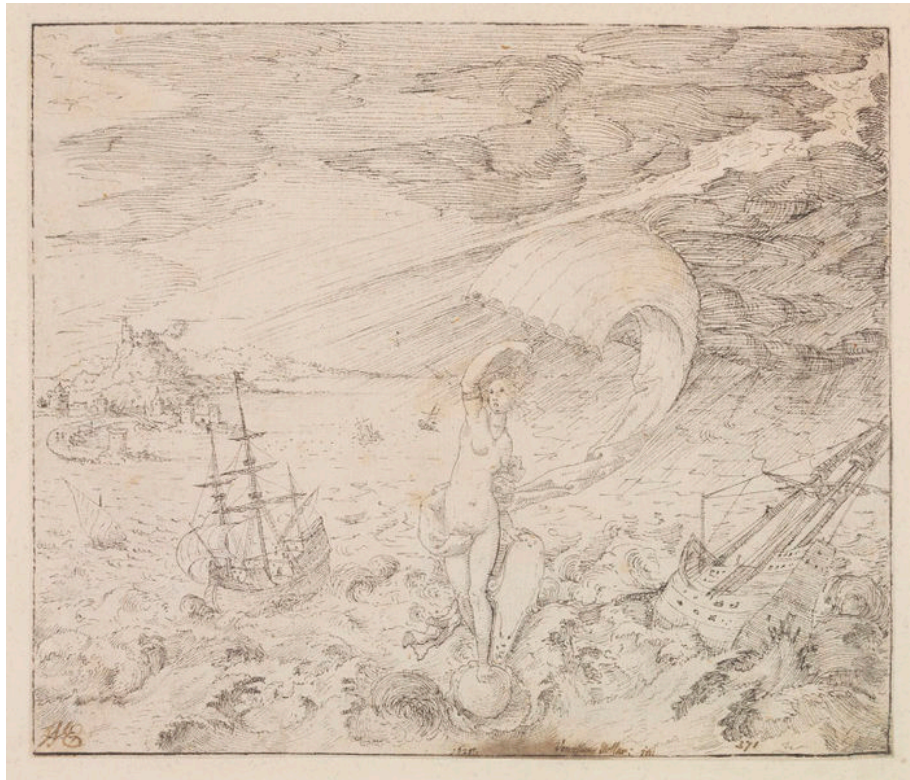


Fig. 1.5. “Fortune” Drawn by Wenceslaus Hollar, 1625.<sup>62</sup>

The raging sea “threatens to overwhelm a number of wallowing galleons. Lightning divides the sky, and Fortuna’s garment transforms itself into a billowing sail. . . . It is evidently intended as a metaphor for the perils of travel”; Fortune’s holding a sail implies that “fortune is blown hither and thither by forces beyond man’s control.”<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, Gilles Corrozet, Parisian bookseller, who published an emblem book entitled *L’hecatographie* (1540) includes an engraving of Fortune with one foot on a dolphin, and one on a sphere; this representation, too, is in the same tradition of Holbein (Fig. 1.6)<sup>64</sup>:

<sup>62</sup> Richard T. Godfrey, *Wenceslaus Hollar: A Bohemian Artist in England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 39. See also Vladimir Denkstein, ed., *Hollar Drawings* (London: Orbis, 1979) 24.

<sup>63</sup> Godfrey 39, 4; Denkstein 24.

<sup>64</sup> A dolphin symbolising swiftness, which is a characteristic of Fortune, was used as a celebrated printer’s mark of Aldus Manutius who founded the Aldine Press at Venice in 1494 (Fig. 1.7).



Fig. 1.6. “Lymage de Fortune” in *L’hecatongraphie*, 1540.<sup>65</sup>

Holbein used a similar design of Fortune on the wave for a woodcut dagger sheath in 1526, although in this case Fortune puts her foot not on a sphere but on a seashell or scallop shell (Fig. 1.8):

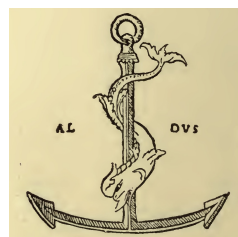


Fig. 1.7. A Printer’s Mark of Aldus Manutius

W. Roberts, *Printers’ Marks: A Chapter in the History of Typography* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1893) 218. See also, A. Hyatt Mayor, *Prints & People: A Social History of Printed Pictures* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971) illustration number 221; Martin Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979) 25; Martin Davies, *Aldus Manutius: Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999) 13-20; Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most and Salvatore Settis, eds., *The Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010) 308.

<sup>65</sup> Gilles Corrozet, *L’hecatongraphie* (1544) & *Les emblemes du tableau de Cebes* (1543): *Reproduits en facsimilé avec une étude critique par Alison Adams*, ed. Alison Adams, Textes littéraires français 480 (Genève: Droz, 1997) sig. Fvii<sup>v</sup>.



Fig. 1.8. “Fortune” Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1526.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, wherever Fortune places her foot, we are able to affirm that Renaissance artists use her feet to emphasise that she is unstable. Therefore, the fact that Holbein depicts Fortune on the wave in some illustrations indicates that his marginal woodcut of the many-headed multitude on the ball wafting over the water in *The Praise of Folly* is a fusion of the fickle multitude and Fortune.

So far our evidence is as follows. The expression, “the many-headed multitude,” originated in Plato and Horace, whose phrases were reintroduced and spread by the Renaissance Humanists, such as Erasmus (very influentially) and Agrippa. Holbein’s marginal illustration embodies the Humanistic view of the multitude, and is a compound of various Humanistic notions which are fundamental to understanding Hydra in *Coriolanus*. *Coriolanus* is a play about a conflict between patricians (including the possibly heroic Coriolanus) and plebeians—who are described as “the many-headed multitude” like a

<sup>66</sup> Holbein the Younger, *Druckgraphik* 24, 237; Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints 1490-1550* (London: British Museum Press, 1995) 233-34.

“Hydra” by Coriolanus. Shakespeare emphasises the shallowness and fickleness of the multitude in the play. These characteristics are common to the goddess Fortune and the multitude and these two representations fuse together in Holbein’s marginal illustration. It is clear, finally, that a link between the goddess and the multitude on the sphere is instability.

But why do we need to examine the representations of Fortune? It is because Fortune dominates all, including rulers and subjects, in Elizabethan and Stuart literature, as we will see below. Rulers, as Machiavelli discussed, seek domination, yet Fortune proves stronger. In their attempts to rule, Fortune and rulers are similar (even if rulers struggle against the goddess). Rulers try to control the whimsical Hydra-headed multitude, but, at the same time, they are inevitably controlled by the fickle Fortune. Moreover, Fortune has a close relationship with Hercules who killed Hydra, confirming the connection to the multitude.

Perhaps the image of Fortune that was most intense and dramatic was that of her ruling rulers, and, certainly, it was pervasive. The relationship we have been exploring among Fortune on the sphere, rulers, and the multitude is aptly demonstrated in Thomas Dekker’s *Old Fortunatus*. After the following stage direction, “Enter a Carter, a Tailor, a Monke, a Shepheard all crown’d, a Nymph with a Globe, another with Fortunes wheele, then Fortune” (1.1.63.S.D.), Fortune says:

Behold you not this Globe, this golden bowle,  
This toy cal’d worlde at our Imperiall feete?  
This world is *Fortunes* ball wherewith she sports.  
Sometimes I strike it up into the ayre,  
And then create I Emperours and kings:  
Sometimes I spurne it: at which spurne crawles out



That wild beast multitude.<sup>67</sup>

These lines invite iconographical interpretation. The “Globe” is Fortune’s “toy” or “ball” or a shaking “golden bowle” on which kings stand. Fortune can create “kings” or the “wild beast multitude” by striking or spurning her ball. This imagery succinctly summarises what we have examined, but there is more to say about the goddess Fortune on the ball. This “Globe,” “golden bowle,” or “toy” called “worlde” is “at our Imperiall feete,” as the many-headed multitude or Fortune stands on the ball in Holbein’s marginal illustration; and “This world is *Fortunes* ball wherewith she sports.” Sometimes Fortune strikes the ball “up into the ayre” and creates “Emperours and kings”: this might imply that Fortune plays tennis. Sometimes she kicks the ball from which the “wild beast multitude” “crawles out.” This imagery could be called a conceit, and Holbein’s marginal drawing partly explains the conceit. However, the imagery of balls themselves and ball sports remains unexplained.

The “sphere” and “globe” of Fortune appear to have been used almost without distinction since antiquity, but another epithet “ball” seems to have been added after the Middle Ages. For example, Chaucer says in his poem, “Truth,” written in 1386-89 that “tikennesse” is a characteristic of both the “hord” and Fortune who “turneth as a bal.”<sup>68</sup> Chaucer probably used the word “bal” to emphasise the unsteadiness of the horde and Fortune, and he might have a pictorial image of the crowd and the Goddess standing on a

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<sup>67</sup> Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953) 1.1.99-105. This allegorical play was first performed before Queen Elizabeth on Christmas night, probably in 1599, in E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923) 3.290-91. As the First Old Man says in the scene of the Prologue at Court: “I am one of her owne countrie, and we adore her by the / name of Eliza” (7-8), this play was dedicated to the Queen, but this dedication contains not only flattery of her but also moral and political instruction for her. Therefore, this citation of Fortune may reflect the real socially and politically unstable situation of her age.

<sup>68</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, “Truth,” *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987) 536, 1-10. *OED* supplies the definition for “tickleness,” citing this poem: “The quality or state of being tickle; insecurity, instability; critical situation, precariousness; inconstancy; uncertainty.”



ball just as Holbein's multitude stood on one. The representations of Fortune's sphere or globe or ball seem to have inspired writers' imagination in Shakespeare's age in which tennis was popular.<sup>69</sup> Some writers employed an allegory of a tennis ball in their works.

Philip Massinger mentions Fortune's tennis ball:

GALEAZZO. Vertue's but a word;  
Fortune rules all.  
MATILDA. We are her Tennis-balls.<sup>70</sup>

Shakespeare's Pericles who is washed up upon the shore of Pentapolis also compares his drifting fate to a tennis ball as a plaything of Fortune.

PERICLES. May see the sea hath cast upon your coast—  
SECOND FISHERMAN. What a drunken knave was the sea to cast thee in  
our way!  
PERICLES. A man, whom both the waters and the wind  
In that vast tennis-court have made the ball  
For them to play upon, entreats you pity him.  
He asks of you that never used to beg. (*Pericles* Scene 5.97-103)<sup>71</sup>

Although many writers allude to Fortune's tennis balls, the most influential references are probably those in Sir Phillip Sidney's *Arcadia*. Sidney says: "he [Antiphilus] quickly made his kingdome a *Teniscourt*, where his subjects should be the balles; not in truth

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<sup>69</sup> There was a tense confrontation on a tennis court between Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Oxford in 1579. Fulke Greville, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke*, ed. John Gouws (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986) 38-40, 199.

<sup>70</sup> Philip Massinger, *The Bashful Lover, The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, ed. Philip Edwards and Colin Gibson, vol. 4, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 4.1.68-69. Thomas Dekker's *Fortune's Tennis* in 1600, and Anthony Munday's *Set At Tennis* in 1600, were played, but both of the plays are not extant. See E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 2: 177-78, 180; 3: 448; 4: 14.

<sup>71</sup> The "complex textual background of *Pericles*" makes Wells and Taylor divide the play in an unusual way (1059). According to the Arden Shakespeare, second series, this part is 2.1.56-62: F. David Hoeniger, ed., *Pericles*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare, new ed. (London: Methuen, 1963). John Webster's Bosola who tries to kill Antonio also refers to tennis balls and expresses his sympathy for the chequered life of his master:

[to the Servant] Smother thy pitty, thou art dead else: Antonio?  
The man I would have sav'd 'bove mine own life!  
We are meerely the Starres tennys-balls (strook and banded  
Which way please them).

John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi, The Complete Works of John Webster*, ed. F. L. Lucas, vol. 2, 4 vols. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1927) 5.4.61-64.

cruelly, but licenciously abusing them (emphasis added); and “[the wormish mankinde] are but like tennisballs, tossed by the racket of the hyer powers.”<sup>72</sup> King Antiphilus treats “his kingdome” as “a Teniscourt”: here Sidney writes about the fickleness of kings, whose fickleness creates an inconstant society and politics. Antiphilus regards his “subjects” as “balles.” This representation is precisely that of the fickle Fortune. The reason why Sidney compares the subjects with “balles” is probably that both of them are unstable; and both the King and Fortune stand on the unstable ball, which represents the unsteady multitude or “subjects.” In addition, we should not forget that Fortune had been described as a tyrant like this King.

The equation “subjects = balls” reminds us of the compound marginal illustration of Holbein. Of course, Sidney does not refer to the representation directly, but there is a possibility that he had in mind the pictorial image of a king or Fortune standing on a ball or the multitude, because he describes the multitude as unstable. Sidney ridicules them in other parts of *Arcadia* as when the two princes Musidoris and Pyrocles encounter some rebellious soldiers and people on their heroic travels. Sidney says: “a popular licence is indeede the many-headed tyranny”; “they were overtaken by an unruly sort of clownes, and other rebels. . . like a violent floud” and “enraged beastes”; additionally, the travellers heard

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<sup>72</sup> Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Albert Feuillerat, vols. 1-2, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922) 1.330, 2.177.

Thomas Dekker also uses the same simile of a tennis court and ball, presumably citing Sidney:

NICHOLETTE. Suppose all kingdomes on the earth were balls,  
And that thou held'st a racket in thy hand,  
To tosse 'em as thou wu'd'st, how wo'dt thou play?

TORENELLI. Why? as with balls, bandy 'em quite away.

NICHOLETTE. A tennis-court of kings could do no more;

Nicholette and Torinelli talk about the promotion and fall at “court” where guile is an important factor for courtly success, but these lines emphasise that social and political stability depends upon the mutability of Fortune and kings who play in a “tennis-court.”

Thomas Dekker, *The Wonder of a Kingdom, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958) 4.1.4-8.

“the horrible cries of this madde multitude.”<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, Sidney portrays the fickle multitude as follows: “O weak trust of the many-headed multitude, whom inconstancie onely doth guide to well doing.”<sup>74</sup> In short, the linkage among Fortune, kings, and the

<sup>73</sup> Sidney, *Arcadia* 1. 201, 311.

<sup>74</sup> Sidney, *Arcadia* 1.318-19. We have discussed the Humanistic sources of the expression, “the many-headed multitude,” but the influence of Sidney’s phrase “many-headed multitude” would be so decisive that the phrase seemed to start to be used as an oft-quoted phrase, and to filter into the hearts of writers and dramatists in late Tudor and early Stuart England after the publication of *Arcadia* in 1590. For example, Michael Drayton used this stock phrase in Michael Drayton, *Peirs Gaveston Earle of Cornwall: His life, Death, and Fortune*, 1593-94, *The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. J. William Hebel, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1931) 203: “This monster now, this many-headed beast, / The people, more unconstant then the wind”; Thomas Dekker, *Lust’s Dominion*, 1600, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 4, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961) 3.4.21-25: “this many headed Cerberus, / This py’d Camelion, this beast, multitude, / Whose power consists in number . . . / This heap of fools, who crowding in huge swarms. . . .” Cerberus is a monster which “eats raw flesh, the brazen-voiced hound of Hades, fifty-headed, relentless and strong.” See Hesiod, *The Theogony* 310-15. Going to the underworld called Hades and kidnapping the beast called Cerberus are the last of Hercules’ twelve labours. Though Hesiod describes Cerberus as a fifty-headed monster, it is usually thought that Cerberus “has three dog heads, a dragon tail, and his back is covered with the heads of serpents”: Maurice Bloomfield, *Cerberus, the Dog of Hades: The History of an Idea* (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1905) 2-3. Therefore, it is appropriate that Dekker compares the multitude to Cerberus, also referring to a chameleon as a symbol of changefulness. Dekker seems to like the epithet of “many-headed” because the phrase is also seen in Thomas Dekker, *Patient Grissil, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953) 5.2.201-02: “multitude, / That many headed beastes”. Poets as well as dramatists use the expression. Peter Woodhouse, poet, wrote his poem titled *The flea sic parua componere magnis* in 1605. This poem is strange on one point: he dedicates it not to “his Patron” but to “the giddie multitude” since he knows no patrons. In the “Epistle Dedicatorie,” he “speak[s]” in a rather inflammatory way to his “Auditors” or “the giddie multitude,” and calls them “the brainlesse multitude” and “thou many headed beast,” because they are so giddy that they will like or dislike this poem capriciously: Peter Woodhouse, *The Flea sic parua componere magnis*, STC (2nd ed.): 25967 (London: 1605) sig. A2<sup>r</sup>. And finally in 1607, Shakespeare wrote *Coriolanus* which includes the famous lines on the multitude. However, we should not forget that Sidney was also indebted to the Humanistic tradition, for it is clear that Sidney read Agrippa’s work. Sidney mentions Agrippa and Erasmus by name in Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie, The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Albert Feuillerat, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923) 26-27: “Agrippa will be as mery in shewing the vanitie of Science, as Erasmus was in the commending of folly.” Here, Sidney uses Agrippa’s argument in order to attack other arts and sciences than poetry. Both Sidney and Agrippa attack the “vanity” of the arts and sciences, but there are differences between them. The main difference is that Agrippa attacks or doubts all the arts and sciences, but Sidney regards poetry as an exception. Agrippa says in his *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, 32-33: “all vertuouse men have dispised Poetrie, as the mother of lies, seeinge that the Poetes doo lie so monstrously: as them that have spent their studie not to speake, nor write any good thinge: but with bodged verses to delite the eares of fooles, and to make a clattering noise with the craftie coveringe of fables, and disceitfullie to devise all things upon a matter of nothinge. . . .” (emphasis added). On the other hand, Sidney defends poetry and poets, though he also knows that people say poetry is “the mother of lyes”; he explains his standpoint: “I answer Paradoxically, but truly, I think truly: that of all writers under the Sunne, the Poet is the least lyer: and though he wold, as a Poet can scarcely be a lyer”; and he concludes that poetry gives us “frutefull knowledges”: Sidney, *Defence* 28. What Agrippa and Sidney use the same phrase “the mother of lies” is a proof that Agrippa might have been influential in Sidney’s literary development, and Sidney was in the great tradition of the English Humanism, which portrays the multitude as the many-headed Hydra; and in fact, Agrippa portrays “the multitude of the people” as the “many headed cruell beast” in *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, 172, 8.

multitude, is fickleness and tyranny; and the complexity of Holbein's illustration has been partly unravelled here. The marginal illustration is formed from the European cultural mixtures in Renaissance: the many-headed part inherits the popular discourses which Plato started using in *The Republic*; the body posture, *contrapposto*, reminds us of the Goddess Fortune in the Renaissance artistic tradition; and the ball floating on the rapid current water signifies whimsicalness and rashness of the multitude and Fortune.

We have shown that Holbein's drawing is a fusion of fickle Fortune, kings, and the multitude, and that the sphere wafting over the water and the rolling tennis ball represent their instability. However, when we see the following woodcut (Fig. 1.9), we realise that there is need of further investigation into Holbein's drawing:

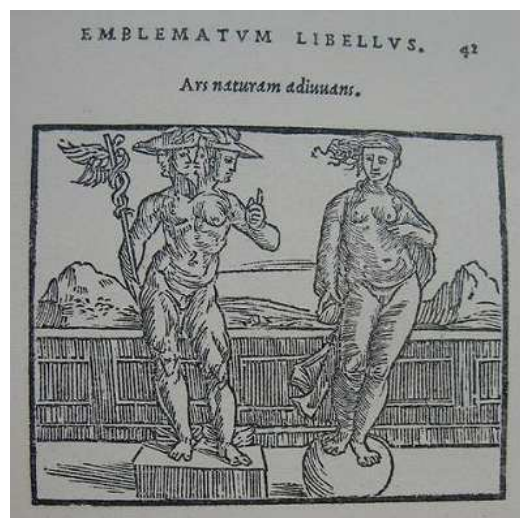


Fig. 1.9. "Mercury and Fortune," Woodcut Known as Emblem 99 in Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum Libellus*, Venice, 1546.<sup>75</sup>

This woodcut was included in an emblem book published by Andrea Alciato. Alciato's background was Humanistic; born in 1492, he was educated as a law student at Milan, Pavia, and Bologna. He accepted the post of civil law in the papal city of Avignon in

<sup>75</sup> Henry Green, ed., *Andreae Alciati Emblematum fontes quatuor: Namely, an Account of the Original Collection Made at Milan, 1522, and Photo-Lith Fac-Similes of the Editions, Augsburg 1531, Paris 1534, and Venice 1546*, The Holbein Society's Facsimile Reprints 4 (Manchester: A. Brothers, 1870) fol. 42.

1518, but, in 1520, Alciato met Boniface Amerbach, a friend of Erasmus, in Avignon, and Amerbach became “the intermediary between Alciato and Erasmus whose *Adages* evoked the themes of many of Alciato’s emblems.”<sup>76</sup> His Latin *Emblemata* published in 1531 had considerable influence and popularity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe. The book, which collected 212 Latin emblems (each of which includes a motto, a picture, and an epigram), was so popular that it went through several editions while he was alive. After the first publication, his book and its commentaries were published in many places such as Paris in 1534, Venice in 1546, and Lyon in 1549 (Spanish translation).<sup>77</sup> It should not be forgotten that Erasmus’ Humanistic *Adages* inspired Alciato’s *Emblemata*.

When we compare the woodcut with the marginal picture of Holbein, we notice some interesting common points between the two. The postures of Mercury and Fortune are *contrapposto* like that of Holbein’s figure. In Alciato’s woodcut, Mercury with a caduceus stands on a stable cuboid, while Fortune stands on an unstable sphere. The title is “Art aiding nature,” and its epigram says:

As Fortune stands upon a sphere, Mercury sits upon a cube;  
 he presides over the arts, she over chance events.  
 Art is made to counter the power of fortune; but  
 when fortune is bad, it often requires the help of art.  
 Therefore, eager youths, learn the good arts,  
 which have within themselves the advantages of an assured fate.<sup>78</sup>

However, before the meaning of the epigram is examined, it is helpful to look at another version of this woodcut in order to mark the difference of the Mercurial images. Although the woodcut below in Alciato’s *Emblemata* was published in Lyons in 1600, one glance is

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<sup>76</sup> Peter M. Daly, Virginia W. Callahan and S. H. Cuttler, eds., Introduction, *Andreas Alciatus: 1 The Latin Emblems, Indexes and Lists* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) n. pag. (an emblem known as Emblem 99).

<sup>77</sup> Daly, Callahan, and Cuttler, eds., Introduction, n. pag.

<sup>78</sup> Daly, Callahan, and Cuttler, eds., n. pag. (an emblem known as Emblem 99).

enough to notice the differences: in the new version, Mercury has only one head, whereas in the old version, the god has many heads, like the multitude in Holbein's picture (Fig. 1.10):

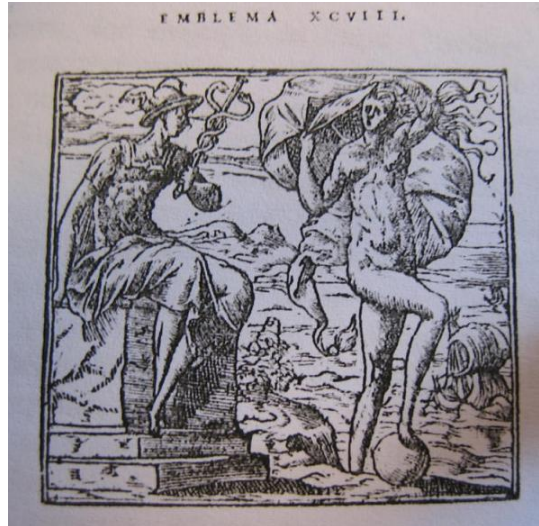


Fig. 1.10. “Mercury and Fortune,” Woodcut Illustrating Emblem XCVIII (but Known as Emblem 99), Lyons, 1600.<sup>79</sup>

The feature of the many-headed Mercury deserves attention, because Mercury was portrayed as a one-head god in all editions except the 1546 one. Why is only the 1546 edition different? There may be several reasons for the representation of a many-headed Mercury. First, the many heads simply symbolise many qualities of Mercury as the god of commerce, invention, cunning, and theft; in fact, when Agrippa discusses heraldry in his *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, he says about the “mingled coloures” Mercury represents: “Al the other mingled coloures they attribute to *Mercurie*, who as he is wandring and unconstat, so doo they declare the varietee of the minde.”<sup>80</sup> One of the characteristics of Mercury is “the varietee of the minde.” Second, as Alciato says, if Mercury is a symbol of “art,” his image may connote the quality of delusive arts Agrippa

<sup>79</sup> Peter M. Daly and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) n. pag. (an emblem known as Emblem 99).

<sup>80</sup> Agrippa 292.

asserts in the title of his *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*: in other words, Mercury is a symbol of uncertain or sceptical arts. Third, as quicksilver is called mercury because it slips from our hand when we try to grasp it, the word “mercurial” which means changeable or volatile is from the name of Mercury.<sup>81</sup> In short, the picture of the many-headed Mercury suggests that this god of cunning and theft is being compared to the many-headed fickle multitude.

Fortune symbolises chance, and Mercury art.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, Wenceslaus Hollar who drew “Fortune” (Fig. 1.5) in 1625, we have seen above, may have described Mercury as follows (Fig. 1.11):

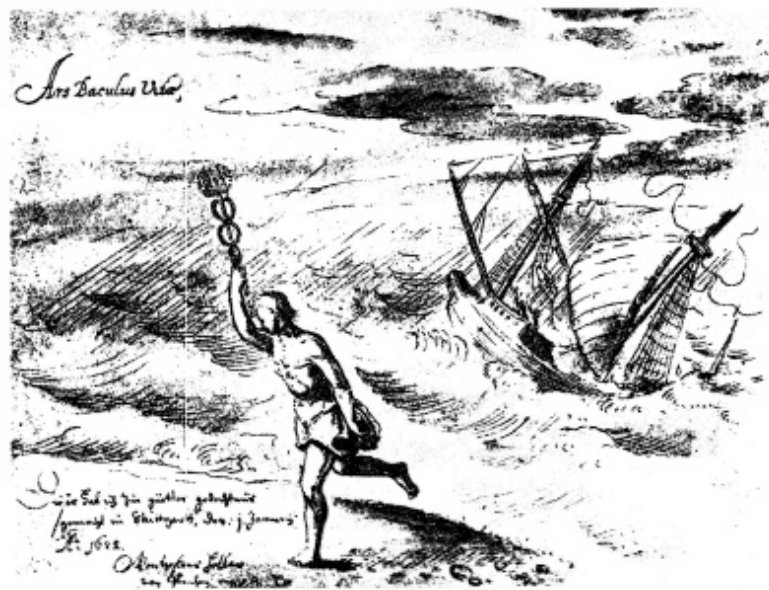


Fig. 1.11. “Mercury” Drawn by Wenceslaus Hollar, 1628.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See the definitions of “Mercurial,” *OED*: “3. a. Of or relating to the Roman god Mercury; resembling or characteristic of Mercury”; “4. Of or relating to metallic mercury (quicksilver); consisting of or containing mercury”; “7. Of a person: having a lively, volatile, or restless nature; liable to sudden and unpredictable changes of mind or mood; quick-witted, imaginative. Later also gen. (applied to animals, phenomena, etc.): changeable, unpredictable, fickle. Originally such qualities were associated with the god or the planet; the sense is now usually understood to allude to the properties of mercury the metal.”

<sup>82</sup> Leslie Hotson, *Shakespeare by Hilliard* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977) 70-71; Liana De Girolami Cheney, *The Homes of Giorgio Vasari* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006) 143-44; Liana De Girolami Cheney, *Giorgio Vasari’s Teachers: Sacred and Profane Art* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007) 107-08.

<sup>83</sup> Denkstein, ed., *Hollar Drawings* 29.

In this etched work, Mercury with his caduceus stands or runs on the *stable* shore, with the raging sea threatening to overwhelm a wallowing galleon as in his “Fortune” (Fig. 1.5). The Latin phrase, “Ars Baculus Vitae” (Art the solace of life), is seen in the work, which is obviously compared with his “Fortune.”<sup>84</sup> However, these equations—Fortune = chance; Mercury = art—are not as simple as they look: the seated figure of Mercury symbolises stability and the standing figure of Fortune does instability. As Erwin Panofsky notes, “sphere = Fortune or chance; cube = Virtue,” and “instability = Fortune; stability = Mercury.”<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, even if the two figures have a confrontational relationship, that too, is an oversimplification. For Mercury and the symbolised arts themselves represent instability in the Humanistic context, as Agrippa shows above. There is, then, a possibility that both Fortune and Mercury emblematised instability. Considered in this way, the picture of the many-headed multitude drawn by Holbein may well be a fusion of the inconstant Fortune and Mercury.

We have carefully examined Holbein’s image so far, but, here, at the end of the chapter, we need to think over whether the image was really circulated in England or not. A proof of the circulation can be found in a title page of John Dee’s book, *A Letter, Containing a Most Briefe Discourse Apologeticall*. . . (Fig. 1.12):

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<sup>84</sup> Richard Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar 1607-1677* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 73; Denkstein 29-30.

<sup>85</sup> Erwin Panofsky, “‘Good Government’ or Fortune?: The Iconography of a Newly Discovered Composition by Rubens,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 68 (1966) 314.



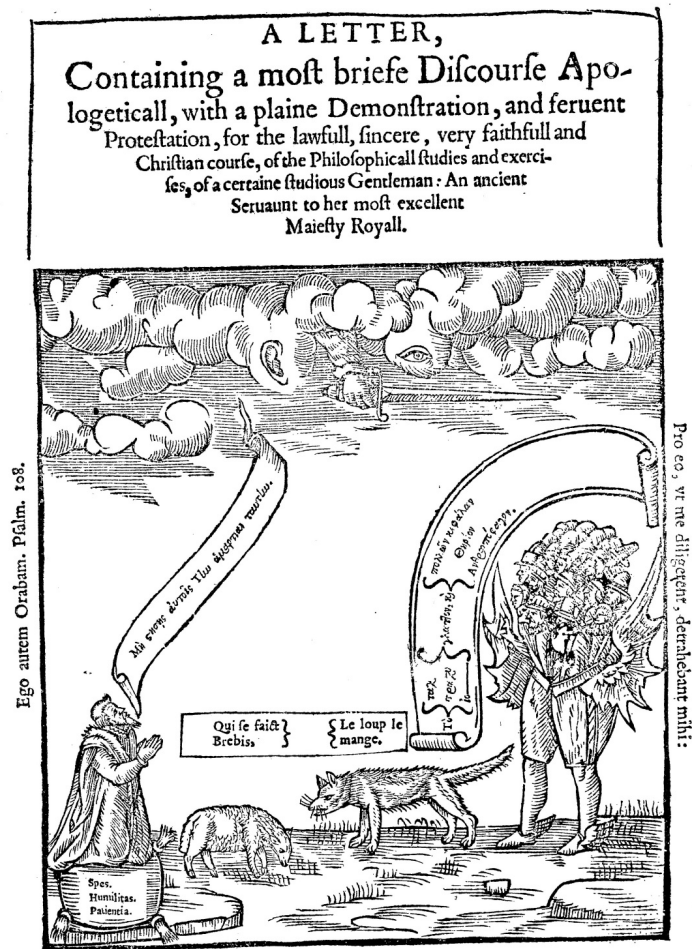


Fig. 1.12. Title Page of John Dee's *A Letter, Containing a most briefe Discourse Apologeticall*. . . , 1599.<sup>86</sup>

Fig. 1.12 is the title page, containing English, French, and Greek texts, of “a pamphlet protesting against the current accusation that the writer was a conjuror.”<sup>87</sup> The “increasing abuse Dee received as a conjuror provoked this letter, written in 1594-95 and addressed to the archbishop of Canterbury, one of the queen’s privy councilors. In it, Dee protests his innocence, documents his learning, service to his country, and obedience to the queen, and

<sup>86</sup> John Dee, *A letter, containing a most briefe discourse apologeticall : with a plaine demonstration, and feruent protestation, for the lawfull, sincere, very faithfull and Christian course, of the philosophical studies and exercises, of a certaine studious gentleman, an ancient seruaunt to her most excellent Maiesty Royall*, English Experience 502 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1973).

<sup>87</sup> Samuel C. Chew, *The Virtues Reconciled: An Iconographic Study*, The Alexander Lectures (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947) 139.

declares the Christian faith.”<sup>88</sup> The many heads signify the “sclanders [slanders]” which Dee received: “the scornefull, the malicious, the proud, and the rash in their vntrue reports, opinions, and fables of my studies, or exercises Philosophicall”; and he wrote this pamphlet “to stop the mouthes.”<sup>89</sup> Fig. 1.13 below is the title page of its reprinted pamphlet, *A Letter, Nine yeeres since, written and first published: Containing a most briefe Discourse Apologetical*, published in 1603-04 (though the account curiously doesn’t tally). The Greek, Latin, and French texts in 1599 edition are translated into English in this 1603-04 edition.



Fig. 1.13. Title page of John Dee’s *A Letter, Nine yeeres since, Written and First Published: Containing a Most Briefe Discourse Apologetical*. . . , 1603-04.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Ruth Samson Luborsky and Elizabeth Morley Ingram, *A Guide to English Illustrated Books, 1536-1603*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies (Tempe, AZ: 1998) 327-28.

<sup>89</sup> Dee sigs. B4<sup>v</sup>; A2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>90</sup> John Dee, *A letter, nine yeeres since, written and first published: containing a most briefe discourse*

Both Figures 1.12 and 1.13 are “carefully designed . . . to illustrate symbolically the author’s pious defense against his enemies”; “They are depicted as a wolf (Envy) and a many-headed monster (Slander) victimizing the author who kneels in prayer for his enemies.”<sup>91</sup> “Here we see the many-headed multitude, the monster which bruits abroad malicious gossip and ill fame, a human figure with many heads and satanic wings.”<sup>92</sup> Kai Wiegandt also points out the connection between fame or rumour and the many-headed multitude.<sup>93</sup> Wiegandt mentions an influence of Greek Hydra in this title page, citing the article “Hydra” of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, but his main point is on the combination between the many-headed monster and Virgil’s Fama (Fame or Rumour) which is covered with many eyes, tongues, mouths, and ears, shown in *Aeneid*, Book IV, 173-97 (Fig. 1.14)<sup>94</sup>:

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*apologetical with a plaine demonstration, and feruent protestation, for the lawfull, sincere, very Christian course, of the philosophicall studies and exercises, of a certaine studious gentleman: a faithfull seruaunt to our late soueraigne lady, Queene Elizabeth, for all the time of her raigne: and (anno 1602. Aug. 9) sworne seruant to the King his most excellent Maiestie*, STC (2nd ed.): 6461 (London: E. Short, 1603-04).

<sup>91</sup> Luborsky 328. (In the left part) Dee kneeling on a cushion (“Spes [Hope], Humilitas [Humility], Patientia [Patience]” in 1599 edition; “Hope, Humilitie, and Patience” in 1603-04 edition) in a prayer (“Μὴ στήσης αὐτοῖς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν αὐτῶν [Do not attribute to them this sin, Acts 7:60]”; “O God impute not this Sinne unto them”); (above) in clouds: the eye, ear, and the hand of God brandishing a sword over (right) a many-headed mob-monster with winged feet (“Τὸ ταχὺ τραχυλογλάπτον, Καὶ πολλῶν κεφάλων θηρίον Ἀνθοφάγον [(Behold) the swiftly hollowed out neck, and the man-eating beast of many heads]”; “The Swift Sharpe Poysonable Tongued Monster of many heads that devoureth men”); (centre) a sheep and a wolf (“Qui se faict Brebis, Le loup le mange [The one who becomes a lamb, the wolf devours]”; “He that maketh himselfe a Sheepe, The Wolfe will eate him”); (margins) citations from the Bible (“pro eo, ut me diligenter, detrahebant mihi: Ego autem Orabam. Psalm. 108”; “For my friendship they were my adversaries: But I gave my self to prayer. Psalm. 109”); ([“testis falsus non erit in punitus et qui loquitur mendacia peribit. Proverb 19:9”]; “A false witness shall not be unpunished: and he that speaketh lyes, shall perish. Proverb. 19. vers. 9”). This analysis of the texts is based upon Luborsky (328), but I owe the Greek, Latin, and French texts, and Biblical knowledge to Dr Joseph A. Munitiz, S.J., and Dr Nicholas King, S.J. Of course, the responsibility for the wording is my own.

<sup>92</sup> Chew, *The Virtues Reconciled* 88.

<sup>93</sup> Kai Wiegandt, *Crowd and Rumour in Shakespeare*, Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 17-18.

<sup>94</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid*.



Fig. 1.14. “Judgment of Fame” Drawn by Virgil Solis, c. 1550.<sup>95</sup>

However, since there is a too big gap between this representation of Fama (Fig. 1.14) and the many-headed Hydra, it is natural that John Dee associated, we think, the monster with Hydra in his pamphlet.<sup>96</sup> The wings in Dee’s illustrations (Figs. 1.12 and 1.13) remind us of Hydra with the wings like a dragon, and the winged shoes in the illustrations may suggest the attribution of sometimes unstable many-faced Mercury.

What are the implications of the trail followed thus far for the overall argument of our thesis? Our object is to explore Hercules-Hydra representations in Shakespeare’s works, among which *Coriolanus* has a special place on this point. The influences on

<sup>95</sup> Max Geisberg and Walter L. Strauss, eds., *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550-1600*, revised ed., 4 vols. (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1974) 1268.

<sup>96</sup> Samuel C. Chew clearly indicates that the marginal illustration by Holbein is in the copy of Erasmus’s *The Praise of Folly* and the illustration is analogous to the representation of Horace’s “belua multorum es capitum” (“You [the people of Rome] are a many-headed monster-thing”) in his *Epistles* (139-40). Chew says, “The commentators on Shakespeare, while citing examples from literature, ignore these visual images” (*The Virtues Reconciled* 140). However, Chew does not notice the analogy between the many-headed monster and Hydra. See also, Samuel C. Chew, *The Pilgrimage of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962) 346.

Shakespeare' use of the expression, "many-headed multitude" or "Hydra-headed multitude" can be roughly divided into two categories: social contexts; and intellectual sources generated by Renaissance Humanism. In Chapter 1, we saw how the "many-headed multitude" in *Coriolanus* might well have been understood by its first audience who, indeed, inhabited a society that may well have seemed to them unstable. This chapter also has shown that the stock phrase "many-headed multitude" was deeply rooted in European intellectual tradition from Plato to the Renaissance writers such as Erasmus, Agrippa, and Philip Sidney. Scholars have pointed out the widespread usages of the cliché, but have not plumbed the depths of it: our aim in this chapter was to sound the depths, which were found in various literary and visual sources. Holbein's strange drawing which visualises the stock phrase brings a rich understanding of the Humanistic view of the multitude; and John Dee's title page might have been influenced by Holbein's marginal illustration and the contemporary literary representations of the Hydra-headed multitude. The shallowness and fickleness of the multitude, stressed in *Coriolanus*, are all characteristics shared with the goddess Fortune (sometimes many-faced Mercury); the two representations fuse together in the marginal illustration of Holbein.

We have established the iconological path of Hydra, and that Hydra is a key for *Coriolanus*, but Hydra and Hercules are two sides of the same coin. The important thing is that Hydra or the many-headed multitude is always the subject to be suppressed by Hercules or the side of the establishment. Therefore, we need now to shift our viewpoint from the governed to the Herculean governors. We shall see that many actual European monarchs compared themselves to the heroic Hercules, and that they had no end of trouble ruling their Hydra-headed multitude.

## Chapter 2

### Herculean Monarchs in the European Renaissance

As we saw in a preliminary analysis of *Coriolanus* in the Introduction, Coriolanus is compared to “Hercules” by Menenius who is criticising the tribunes’ manipulation of the multitude:

COMINIUS. *(to the tribunes)* He’ll shake your Rome about your ears.  
MENENIUS. As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit. (4.6.103-04)

Why, then, did Shakespeare compare Coriolanus to Hercules? The chapter will argue that Herculean representations were not just rhetorical expressions to stress Coriolanus’ “pride,” “anger,” and “strength,” as Eugene M. Waith underestimates the significance of the representations.<sup>1</sup> In *Coriolanus* they reflect political and religious contexts based upon the real politics in Europe and the Humanist tradition.

The starting point for this chapter, which will deal with Herculean monarchs struggling against their Hydra-headed multitudes in the European Renaissance, is provided by the following citation from “To the Reader” of King James VI and I’s *Basilicon Doron* in 1598:

To which *Hydra of diversly-enclined spectatours*, I have no targe to oppone but plainenesse, patience, and sinceritie: plainenesse, for resolving and satisfying of the first sort; patience, for to beare with the shallownesse of the next; and sinceritie, to defie the malice of the third with-all. Though I cannot

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<sup>1</sup> Eugene M. Waith, *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare, and Dryden* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962) 122, 125. His book was written in 1962, but detailed and meticulous research on Shakespeare’s usage of Hercules and Hydra has not been carried out since then.

please all men therein, I am contented, so that I onely please the vertuous sort:<sup>2</sup>  
(emphasis added)

The context of this quotation is that King James realises his book will be variously interpreted by the readers, or “diversly-enclined spectatours” like “Hydra.” At a first glance, this passage seems clear, merely asserting that the book may be given several interpretations. However, the phrase, “Hydra of diversly-enclined spectatours” strikes a note of contempt for his fickle subjects; and the word, “spectatours,” appears not to suit the context, since *Basilicon Doron* is not a play but a book. Why, then, did King James use this phrase here?

If his subjects are a Hydra, he implicitly compares himself to Hercules who disposed of the many-headed monster. In other words, we feel James’ hostility towards the people, and we can read this passage as a confrontation between the Herculean king and the formidable multitude. In fact, as the Herculean Coriolanus hates the Hydra-headed multitude, some examples of King James’ dislike of them are reported by several contemporaries. King James went hunting with Count Harley de Beaumont, who reported an exchange between the king and people at the hunting ground on 12 September, 1603:

James is so passionately addicted to the chase, that he for the sake of it postpones all business, to great scandal. . . . He was yesterday a little disturbed by the populace, which ran together from all sides to see him. He fell into such anger upon this, that I was quite unable to appease him; he cursed every one he met, and swore that if they would not let him follow the chase at his pleasure, he would leave England. Words of passion which meant no harm, but calculated to draw upon him great contempt and inextinguishable hate from the people.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> James I, King of England, *Basilicon Doron*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville, rep. ed., King James VI and I: Political Writings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 9.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Ludwig Georg von Raumer, *History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Illustrated by Original Documents*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1835) 201-02. On King James’ hatred for the people, see Shannon Miller, “Topicality and Subversion in William Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 32.2 (1992) 292.

This report warns that James' anger could "draw upon him great contempt and inextinguishable hate from the people." There is other evidence that James disliked being surrounded by the people:

The Kings first going abroad was privately to visit some of his *houses*; for *naturally* he did not *love* to be looked on, and those *formalities* of State, which set a *lustre* upon *Princes* in the peoples eyes, were but so many burthens to him: for his private *recreations* at home, and his *hunting* exercises abroad, both with the least disturbance were his delights. While he remained in the Tower, he took pleasure in baiting *Lions*, but when he came abroad, he was so troubled with *swarms*, that he feared to be baited by the *people*. And the *Parliament* now drawing on, . . . the City and Suburbs being one great *Pageant*, wherein he must give his ears leave to suck in their gilded *Oratory*, though never so *nauseous* to the *stomach*. He was not like his *Predecessor*, the late *Queen* of famous *memory*, that with a well-pleased affection met her peoples Acclamations, thinking most highly of her self, when she was born up on the *wings* of their *humble supplications*. He endured this *days* brunt with *patience*, being assured he should never have such another, and his *triumphal* riding to the *Parliament* that followed: But afterwards in his *publick* appearances (especially in his *sports*) the accesses of the people made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with *frowns*, that we may not say with *curses*.<sup>4</sup>

James was "troubled with *swarms*," and "he feared to be baited by the *people*"; "he often dispersed them with *frowns*, that we may not say with *curses*." His behaviour towards the multitude was sharply contrasted with the friendliness of the late Queen Elizabeth, and his manifestations of dislike for them were probably an everyday occurrence, as another witness indicates:

In the King's short progress from Whitehall to Westminster, these passages following were accounted somewhat remarkable: First, that he spake often and lovingly to the people, standing thick and three-fold on all sides to behold him, "God bless ye! God bless ye!" contrary to his former hasty and passionate custom, which often in his sudden distemper would bid a p--- or a plague on such as flocked to see him.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Arthur Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James the First, Relating to What Passed from His First Access to the Crown, till His Death*, Wing: W2888 (London: 1653) 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> Simonds D'Ewes, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, ed. James Orchard



The reason why James used the unfitting word, “spectatours,” in the section “To the Reader” of *Basilicon Doron* becomes clear here. The word expresses his dislike of being “looked on” by the multitude, “swarms” who may “bait” him. The king detests the Hydra-like multitude, as Coriolanus does; and it is worthy of note that James implied that he was Hercules in the political book, which was “directed to my eldest son [Henry]; which I wrote for exercise of mine owne ingyne, and instruction of him, who is appointed by God (I hope) to sit on my Throne after me: For the purpose and matter thereof being onely fit for a King, as teaching him his office” (James I 4). Government policy toward the multitude is fundamental to ruling a country. Additionally and more concretely, James impresses upon Henry the importance of the policy toward the multitude in a rhetorical question: “Whom-to can so rightly appertaine this Booke of instructions to a Prince in all the points of his calling, aswell generall, as a Christian towards God; as particular, *as a King towards his people?* (emphasis added)” (James I 2). In this sense, the confrontation between Herculean monarchs and the Hydra-headed multitude is a significant topic to be scrutinised. The adjective “Hydra-headed” was not merely a figure of speech in the age of the European Renaissance as we have proved above; and we will see in this chapter that the epithet “Herculean” had also political and religious connotations behind the rhetorical flourish.<sup>6</sup>

The images of Hercules and Hydra were used to underline the political relationship between monarchs and subjects across Europe. Since Europe is too vast for investigation, this study will be limited to just England and France; the usage of Herculean representations was different in the two countries, and reflected their domestic and religious

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Halliwell, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1845) 170.

<sup>6</sup> King James specifies that *Basilicon Doron* was written for the religious policy: “For my Booke, suppose very small, being divided in three severall parts; the first part thereof onely treats of a Kings duety towards God in Religion, wherein I have so clearly made profession of my Religion, calling it the Religion wherein I was brought up.” See James I 5.

policies. As the European Renaissance, which rediscovered Hercules and Hydra, moved north from Italy to France and England, analyses of representations of Hercules make it possible to trace the spread of Renaissance Humanism throughout Europe and to understand how deeply they permeated European thought. By following the footsteps of Hercules, we can also see the religious policies of European countries at the time of the Reformation. If a country adopted Protestantism in a historical moment and compared the ruler to Hercules, Catholics were inevitably dissidents, and compared to Hydra. This comparison applied to both France and England.

This chapter adopts the following procedure. We start by examining French examples of the Herculean monarchs, which will illuminate the European phenomenon of the adjective “Herculean,” and which are much clearer than those of England. We will study Herculean instances of French kings such as Charles IX, Henri III, and Henri IV who struggled to resolve the religious conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism. After the French examples, we move to Elizabeth I. Here the conflict is more intricate, because the Reformation made the English Herculean monarch an intricately layered figure which requires some careful analysis. We will find that the French kings are monolayered, or simple, Herculeses, but the English queen has multilayered, or composite, images of Hercules, St. George, and King Arthur, who killed Hydra with the club, a dragon with his sword, Askalon, and a red dragon with his Excalibur, respectively. Moreover, the many-headed dragon in the Apocalypse was well-known. Representations of Hercules and Hydra in England were, thus, fused with the four types of heroes and dragons which had different sources. The theme of these dragon slayers held a significant position in English literature, history, and society, though the theme is so stale that it often eludes

notice. It is impossible to divorce the dragons from the legendary heroes of England. Since the English monarchs had the multilayered images of the dragon slayers, study of political and religious situations in England discloses to us that Shakespeare's Herculean Coriolanus was a product of the age. We shall see that the compound images of Hercules and Hydra in England were not limited to Shakespeare's works. Among his contemporaries, Edmund Spenser provides the best samples of multilayered images of Hercules, St. George, King Arthur, Hydra, and dragons, including the Dragon of the Apocalypse. Therefore we will scrutinise Spenser's works in the final section of this chapter.

The design of a French Renaissance medal offers an appropriate starting point. As we will find, this medal demonstrates that in Europe the concept of the "Herculean monarch" was established. The reason why we deal with French representations of Hercules first is that they are much clearer than those of England.

People see money and its design daily, consciously or unconsciously. Pictures of kings, queens, great men and women are chosen as the design. The design of coins and medals can be seen as registering social conditions, and it plays a crucial role of propaganda for the masses by government. Margaret M. McGowan points out: as "Roman emperors exploited coins and medals for their own selfish intentions and not only for remembrance," "political manipulation of coins and medals was. . . engaged in by Renaissance princes," who also appreciated the power of coins and medals as propaganda.<sup>7</sup> The importance of coins and medals was undoubtedly realised by European monarchs in the Renaissance.

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<sup>7</sup> Margaret M. McGowan, *The Vision of Rome in Late Renaissance France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) 72-73. See also Richard Cooper, "Collectors of Coins and Numismatic Scholarship in Early Renaissance France," *Medals and coins from Budé to Mommsen*, eds. Michael H. Crawford, J. B. Trapp and C. R. Ligota, Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts 21 (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1990) 5-24.

Peter Burke remarks upon the situation in Italy:

Like the coins of ancient Rome, the medals of Renaissance Italy often carried political messages. . . . Mechanically reproducible as they were, and relatively cheap, medals were a good medium for spreading political messages and giving a regime a good image.<sup>8</sup>

For example, in France, “Charles IX, after the massacre of St Bartholomew, instructed Nicolas Favayer to strike two medals—one showing the king enthroned trampling over the rebels, its reverse inscribed ‘Pietas excitavit iustitiam’ (Piety excites Justice), and dated 24 August 1572; the other depicting Charles IX as emperor showing on the reverse Hercules killing the Hydra and dated 3 September 1572.”<sup>9</sup> The following picture shows the second medal (Fig. 2.1):



Fig. 2.1. Medal Struck by Nicolas Favayer to Commemorate the Massacre of St Bartholomew in 1572.<sup>10</sup>

It is significant, moreover, that the image of Charles IX as Hercules killing Hydra had

<sup>8</sup> Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 131-33.

<sup>9</sup> McGowan 73.

<sup>10</sup> Nicolas Favayer, *Figure et exposition des pourtraictz et dictons contenuz ès médailles de la conspiration des rebelles en France, opprimée et estaincte par le roy très chrestien Charles IX, le 24. jour d'aoust 1572* (Paris: J. Dallier, 1572) sig. Av<sup>v</sup>.

already been described in a drawing for the royal entry of Charles IX and his queen Elizabeth of Austria into Paris in 1571 one year before the Massacre of St Bartholomew in 1572 (Figs. 2.2 and 2.3):



Fig. 2.2. Design for a Triumphal Arch, Project of 11 October 1570 for the Porte aux Peintres, Stockholm.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Victor Ernest Graham and William McAllister Johnson, *The Paris Entries of Charles IX and Elisabeth of Austria, 1571: With an Analysis of Simon Bouquet's Bref et sommaire recueil* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) 436, 452. The Cronstedt Collection in Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Inventory No. NMH CC 190.

<<http://emp-web-22.zetcom.ch/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=32742&viewType=detailView>>. See also Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975) 127-30, plate 18a.



Fig. 2.3. Enlarged Part of Fig. 2.2.

In this drawing, Hydra is depicted near Hercules killing “people sprouting out of the ground.” The connection between the violent Hydra and the people would be obvious. This drawing suggests that Charles IX as Hercules conquered certain French people.<sup>12</sup> The identity of the people is not clear in the drawing, but the medal of Charles IX and Hydra after the Massacre indicates that they were the Huguenots, often described as a formidable monster to be tamed. The Catholic and Royalist Pierre de Ronsard depicted the Huguenots as Hydra in his poems: *L’hydre desfaict* in 1569 and *Les elemens ennemis de l’hydre* in 1578.<sup>13</sup> These works were published “to quash the Protestant ‘hydra’ after the official beginnings of the Wars of Religion in 1562.” In the former poem, Ronsard praised Henri, duke of Anjou (the future Henri III), brother of Charles IX, who cut off the heads of the Huguenots as a Hydra.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Graham and Johnson 44.

<sup>13</sup> Pierre de Ronsard, *Oeuvres complètes*, eds. Jean Céard, Daniel Ménager and Michel Simonin, new ed., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1993-94) 2.1073-78, 2.1078-80. See Compton Rees, Jr., *The Hercules Myth in Renaissance Poetry and Prose*, Diss. Rice University, 1962 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1962) 176-77.

<sup>14</sup> Tom Conley, “Ronsard on Edge: ‘Les Amours d’Eurymédon et Callirée’ (1570),” *The New Centennial Review* 2.1 (2002) 36. See also the notes on the two poems in Ronsard, *Oeuvres complètes*, 2.1603-05; Malcolm Smith, “Lost Works by Ronsard,” *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* Ser. 6, 8.2 (1986) 120.

McGowan does not explain the context of the medal's casting. It is worth investigating the social context of the Massacre of St Bartholomew in order to better understand the meaning of the design. With the rapid spread of Protestantism, especially Calvinism, after the publication of *Christianae religionis institutio* in 1536, French Catholics and Protestants came to a confrontation. The Catholics, who felt that their faith was threatened, acted against the Protestants, under the vigorous leadership of Henri II.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, instead of being totally suppressed, Calvinism filtered into the hearts of people from various strata of society. After the death of Henri II, Catherine de' Medici (widow of Henri II and mother of the three successive kings, François II, Charles IX, and Henri III) actually controlled the country. She issued the Edict of Toleration, also known as the Edict of Saint-Germain, which gave limited tolerance to the French Huguenots in 1562. On the other hand, the forces ranged against Catherine de' Medici, or against the Guises, such as the Comte de Coligny, Admiral of France, and the Bourbons approached the Protestants, and plotted to overthrow the government in collusion with them. The relations between the two factions grew more and more strained, and the tension peaked in 1572. Catherine de' Medici, who feared the power of the Huguenots, urged the Guise faction to assassinate the Huguenot leader, the Comte de Coligny, but the plot ended in failure. This incident caused extreme tension in Paris. Catherine persuaded Charles IX to authorise the killing of all the Huguenot leaders gathered in Paris for the wedding of Henri of Navarre. Eventually, almost 3000 Huguenots were massacred by the Catholic nobles and the Parisian multitude.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Mack P. Holt *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 7-49; R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, 3rd ed., Seminar Studies in History (Harlow: Longman, 2010) 21-22.

<sup>16</sup> Holt 76-98; Knecht 43-52; See also, David Potter, *The French Wars of Religion: Selected Documents* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997) 122-50.

In this religious and political context, the meaning of the medal of Charles IX can be clarified: the design signifies that the Catholic Charles IX as Hercules slays the Huguenots as the many-headed Hydra. As the carved letters on the medal show, Charles IX brought the rebels under control on 24 August, 1572: the Catholic king attacking the Protestants compared himself to Hercules, and the Hydra denotes the many-headed Huguenots dominated by him. However the king pacified not only the Huguenots but also the Parisian mob: the many-headed Hydra on the medal is the symbol of both the Huguenots and the Parisian multitude.

After the death of Charles IX the representation of the Huguenots as Hydra was appropriated by the next Catholic French king, Henri III. Henri III adopted the decoration of Hercules killing Hydra on the triumphal arch in his Royal Entry into Mantua in 1574 (Figs. 2.4 and 2.5)<sup>17</sup>:

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<sup>17</sup> Egon Verheyen, "Alciato's Hercules Emblem (No. 138) and Related Scenes: Questions of Interpretation," *Andrea Alciato and the Emblem Tradition: Essays in Honor of Virginia Woods Callahan*, ed. Peter M. Daly (New York: AMS Press, 1989) 51.



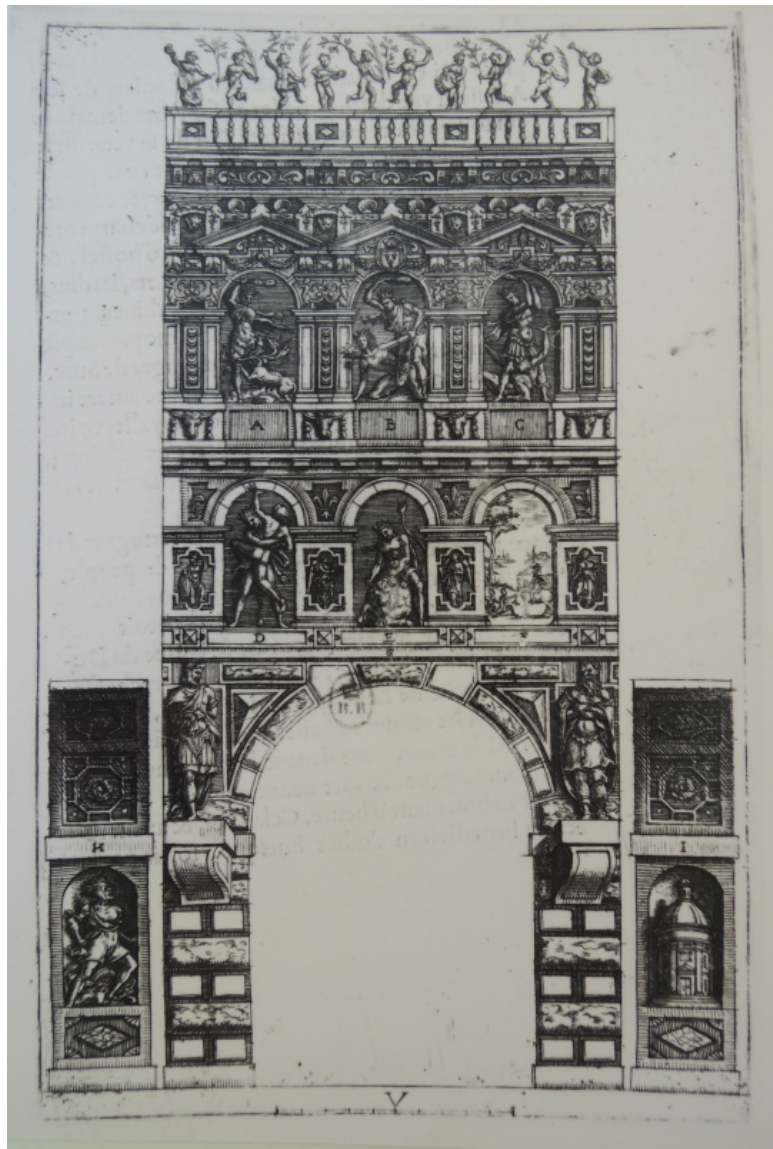


Fig. 2.4. Henri III's Entry into Mantua in 1574.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Blaise de Vigenère, *La somptueuse et magnifique entrée du très-chrestien roy Henry III. de ce nom, roy de France et de Pologne, grand Duc de Lithuanie, &c. En la cité de Mantoue, avec les portraits des choses les plus exquises, par B. D. Vigne* (Paris: Nicolas Chesneau, 1576) plate 5. The Warburg Institute Photographic Collection, University of London, has this photographic copy.

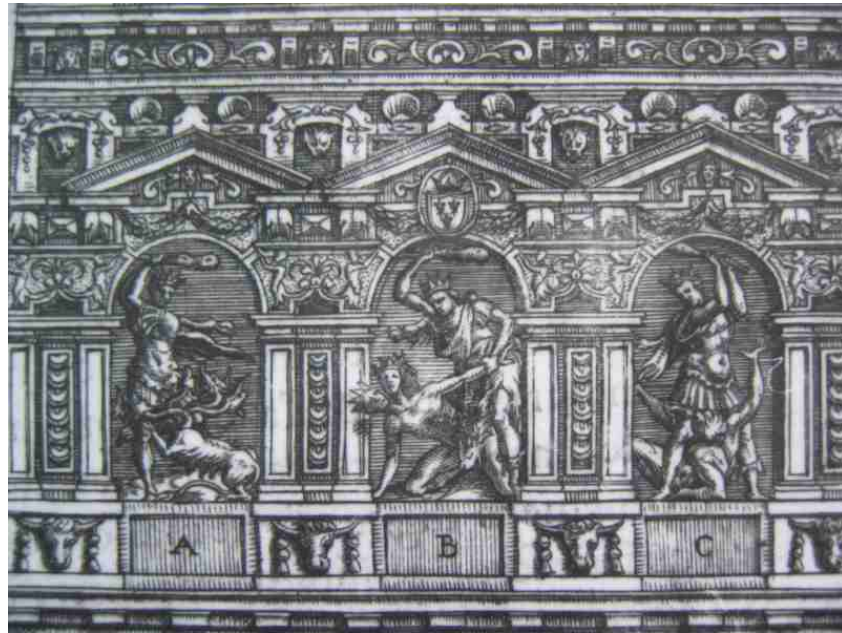


Fig. 2.5. Enlarged Part of Fig. 2.4.

Henri III was “celebrated as a second Hercules” in the Entry, and the text on the arch read “HENRICE MAGNE ET ALTER HERCVLES FORTIS DOMARE PERGE MONSTRA BELLICA’ (Great Henry, powerful king and Hercules reborn continue in taming the bellicose monsters).”<sup>19</sup> As Egon Verheyen suggests, judging from his biographical context, the “MONSTRA BELLICA’ must indicate the religious wars Henri fought against the Huguenots.” The pope also manipulated this representation, and issued a medal on which Hercules killing Hydra was engraved to commemorate the slaughtering of the Huguenots during the Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s night.<sup>20</sup>

However, this representation of Hercules killing Hydra is not as simple as it looks, and the simple Catholic / Protestant split suggested so far does not hold. For the next French king, Henri IV, who was not a Catholic but a Huguenot, also used the pictorial images of Hercules. One of the examples is the following picture called “Henri IV en Hercule terrassant l’hydre de Lerne,” painted by Toussaint Dubreuil, French painter, around

<sup>19</sup> Verheyen 52.

<sup>20</sup> Verheyen 52.

1600 (Fig. 2.6)<sup>21</sup>:



Fig. 2.6. *Henri IV en Hercule terrassant l'hydre de Lerne*, Drawn by Toussaint Dubreuil, c. 1600, Musée du Louvre, Paris.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, many proofs that Henri IV himself liked the image of Hercules slaying Hydra for his royal entries are shown in the following pictures (Figs. 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9):

<sup>21</sup> Cécile Scailliérez, "Le 'mensonger et l'impudique': A propos d'un singulier portrait d'Henri IV peint dans l'entourage de Toussaint Dubreuil," *Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 53.1 (2003) 37-47.

<sup>22</sup> From Scailliérez 38. See also the official website of the Louvre Museum <[http://cartelfr.louvre.fr/cartelfr/visite?srv=car\\_not\\_frame&idNotice=1110](http://cartelfr.louvre.fr/cartelfr/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=1110)>.



Fig. 2.7. Henri IV's Entry into Lyon in 1595.<sup>23</sup>

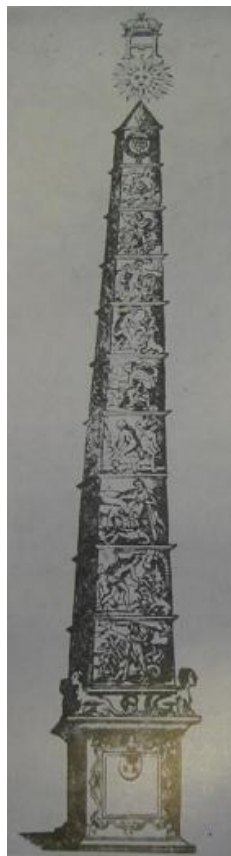


Fig. 2.8. Henri IV's Entry into Rouen in 1596.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Jerzy Banach, *Hercules Polonus: studium zikonografii sztuki nowożytnej* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1984) plate 100; Friedrich Polleroß, "From the Exemplum Virtutis to the Apotheosis: Hercules as an Identification Figure in Portraiture: An Example of the Adoption of Classical Forms of Representation," *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation*, ed. Allan Ellenius (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) 48.

<sup>24</sup> Banach plate 102.



Fig. 2.9. Enlarged Part of Fig. 2.8.

Henri IV was evidently a Hercules enthusiast, but it is complicated to attain an interpretation of Henri IV's portrait by Toussaint Dubreuil because the Protestant Henri of Navarre converted to Catholicism in order to take the throne as Henri IV. Although the last Valois king of France, Henri III, appointed Henri of Navarre as his successor on his deathbed, the power of Henri IV was insufficient to rein in the court and the country in which the Catholics were dominant; therefore his conversion was essential. He encountered resistance from reactionary Catholics, but he gradually gained control of all France and could partly allay the complaints of the Huguenots by the Edict of Nantes in 1598.<sup>25</sup> Henri III had compared the Huguenots and the Parisian multitude to a Hydra, and Henri IV, who had been a Huguenot, probably knew this comparison on the medal. Henri

<sup>25</sup> Ronald S. Love, *Blood and Religion: The Conscience of Henri IV, 1553-1593* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001) 269-304, Chapter 7, "Conversion and the Conscience of the King, May to July 1593"; Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1995) 208-17. See also Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion*, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2002).



IV's adoption of the design indicates that the French kings were obsessed by the Herculean images even if used in opposing contexts. Additionally, Henri IV's mysterious smile in the picture may imply his innermost confidence that he had pacified his enemies including the Catholics and the Parisian multitude by his conversion.

From the discussion so far, it can be demonstrated that Hercules and Hydra are deeply embedded in the shifting French religious policies, where changes in the Hercules-Hydra representations were linked with the changes of the rulers. However, the apparent obsession with the Herculean images among rulers was a phenomenon of the European Renaissance which moved north from Italy to the rest of the continent. France and England shared this obsession. Just as the French kings arranged the Herculean representations to suit their politics, the English monarchs, such as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, also adopted them as a political and religious expedient. Thus, in England, too, rulers were identified with Hercules, and the many-headed rebellious multitude was compared to Hydra. However, at the same time, as a result of the religious innovation, the Church of England became identified with Hercules, and the Catholic Church became compared to Hydra.

We can now turn to English examples of Hercules-Hydra representations. These will be analysed in order to understand what the "Herculean" King James tried to transmit as his political legacy to his son Henry in *Basilicon Doron*. As an instance of the English Hercules, John Lyly's poem "The Trivmphs of Trophes" (1586) gives us an appropriate point of departure for our discussion. The topic of the poem was Queen Elizabeth's admirable triumph over the Babington Plot, which was a conspiracy planning to assassinate the Queen, in order to place Mary, Queen of Scots, on the English throne, and to restore the

Catholic establishment. The ringleaders were Antony Babington, a former page of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and Jon Ballard, a Jesuit priest. Babington and his conspirators secretly contacted Mary by ciphered letters, but the plot failed because Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's secretary of state and her spymaster, could decode the letters.<sup>26</sup> In the poem Lyly compares the conspirators to "*Hidras* heads which erst *Alcides* [i.e. Hercules] slue": they tried "To wrest from *Hercules* hand his Club," but all their efforts resulted in failure.<sup>27</sup> This reference illustrates that Hydra as a symbol of disorder is the subject of the government's control both in France and in England, though Hydra as the subject to be suppressed metamorphoses into various forms, such as the many-headed multitude, conspiracy, and rebellion.

England and France shared almost the same usages of the Hercules-Hydra images, which were both in the tradition of Humanism, but, of course, the political and religious differences between the two countries produced the differences of understanding of the Hercules-Hydra representations. The representations of Hercules and Hydra in England are more complicated than those in France because the English Hercules is a complex compound of European Hercules, St. George, King Arthur, and God, all of whom are closely connected with slaying a dragon. Additionally Hercules and Hydra were symbols of the dramatic religious and political changes of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

One example of this complexity is found in the writing of John Bale, the influential

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<sup>26</sup> John Hungerford Pollen, *Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Plot*, Publications of the Scottish History Society, 3rd ser. 3 (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1922); Alan Gordon Smith, *The Babington Plot* (London: Macmillan, 1936); Jenny Wormald, *Mary Queen of Scots: A Study in Failure* (London: Collins and Brown, 1991) 185-86; Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I* (London: Edward Arnold, 1993) 343-54.

<sup>27</sup> John Lyly, "The Trivmphs of Trophes," *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. R. Warwick Bond, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902) 429.

and prolific Protestant propagandist, who wrote a book to censure degenerate Catholic monastic houses in 1546-48, twelve years after the Act of Supremacy. Bale writes:

our noble kyng Edward, and hys valeaunt father kinge Henry afor hym, threwe of from theyr shulders, the execrable yoke of those obstinate infidels. Neyther nedeth he to feare, to treade styll undre hys fete that *odyouse hydre and his singe serpent of Rome*.<sup>28</sup> (emphasis added)

Moreover, Bale mentions Hydra more directly in another passage framed to criticise Roman Catholics. Here the English Hercules is a compound image of Hercules and St. George:

As great honoure wyl it nowe be to yow (yea, rather much greater) to flee the sede of the Serpent by the worde of God, as ever it was to *Saynt George* that noble captayne, to flee the great *hydre or Dragon at Silena*.<sup>29</sup> (emphasis added)

The image of Henry VIII and Edward VI crushing the Roman Hydra underfoot is appropriate for Protestant propaganda. Bale's hatred for Catholicism is shown also in another book published in 1544: "we se nothyng in you but hawtynesse / vayneglorie / couetousnesse / pryde / hatred / malice / mannisslaughter / banketynges / glotonie / dronkenesse / slowthe / sedicyon / ydolatrie / witchecraft / fornicacyon / lechere / lewdeness."<sup>30</sup> The Hydra was a symbol of hated Catholicism, and the Herculean kings were the saviours of the country. These quotations from Bale are suggestive for the following three reasons. First, they show the conversion of the Hercules-Hydra representations from Catholic Hercules and Protestant Hydra in France to Protestant

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<sup>28</sup> John Bale, *The First Two Partes of the Actes or Vnchast Examples of the Englysh Votaryes Gathered out of Their Owne Legenades and Chronycles* by Johan Bale, STC (2nd ed.): 1273.5 (London: 1551) sig. P.vi.<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> Bale sig. K.<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> John Bale, *The Epistle Exhortatorye of an Englyshe Christyane vnto His Derelye beloued Co[n]treys of Englande against the Pomposse Popyshe Bysshoppes therof, as yet the True Members of Theyr Fylthy Father the Great Antichrist of Rome, Henry Stalbrydge*, STC (2nd ed.): 1291a (Antwerp: 1544) sigs. C.<sup>v</sup>-C.ii.<sup>i</sup>.



Hercules and Catholic Hydra in England. Second, they show the fusion between Hercules and St. George, King Arthur, (and sometimes God), all of whom are dragon slayers.

Third, they show the confusion between Hydra and dragons in England, also found in *Coriolanus*. Let us explore each of these three issues in turn.

First, the reversal phenomenon of the Hercules-Hydra representations in France and England is seen in some works of Protestant propagandists in England. For example, there is a letter written to Henry VIII around 1543-1544 after the proclamation of the Act of Supremacy, by John Elder, a clerk at the court of Scottish King James V.<sup>31</sup> Elder's letter seems to exemplify the religious confusion of the age. Driven by patriotic sentiment, which was expressed in the heading of the letter: "A Proposal for Uniting Scotland with England, Addressed to King Henry VIII," Elder describes "what miserable estate the realme of Scotland is presently in," mentioning "sedicion," "variance," "dissension," "insurreccions," "theifte," "extortions," "dearth," "misery," and "hypocrisy" (7, 9). Elder deplores that after the death of James V "the counsels of the churchmen of the old faith, became peculiarly obnoxious," and even "during the regency of Mary of Guise" these ministers "became still more odious" (3). As a Protestant, he complained about the churchmen of the old faith. In order to amend the wretched state of Scotland, Elder proposed that Henry VIII, a Protestant king, "marye our younge Queyne of Scotland." He thought that this marriage would bring prosperity to both England and Scotland (8).

Praising Henry VIII, he compared the king to "Hercules" who had "strength and fortitude to

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<sup>31</sup> John Elder, "A Proposal for Uniting Scotland with England, Addressed to King Henry VIII, by John Elder, Clerke, A Reddshanke," *The Bannatyne Miscellany: Containing Original Papers and Tracts, Chiefly Relating to the History and Literature of Scotland*, ed. Bannatyne Club, rep. ed., vol. 1, 3 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1973) 2-18. This letter was transcribed from the original manuscript in the British Library (Royal MS 18 A. xxxviii). For the analysis of the letter to Henry VIII, see James Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, Preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and Elsewhere* (London: Mackie and Co., Ltd., 1902) 285-87.

owerthrow and wressell with the saide Cardinall and his chaplans” (17).

The historical and religious background of John Elder’s “Proposal for Uniting Scotland with England” might be explained in a little more detail. The reign of the Scottish king James IV was marked by the battle between the pro-England faction and the pro-French one, but James IV respected the relationship between Scotland and France, a Catholic country under the reign of François I. James V, son of James IV, married Madelein, daughter of François I, and after her sudden death in half a year, James V remarried Mary of Guise, a daughter of the Duc de Guise. The Guises were a dyed-in-the-wool Catholic family, and killed thousands of Protestants in the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, as we have seen above. James V’s marriage with Mary of Guise inevitably put him in the pro-French faction, and the Scottish government strongly opposed the English government of Henry VIII who had been excommunicated from the Catholic Church.<sup>32</sup>

John Elder wrote the letter to Henry VIII. This was the historical context in which he severely criticises the corruption of the Catholic clergymen such as the “pestiferous Cardinall, and his blynd ignoraunt busschops, with certane other wylde, fals, craftie bores, which haue drunkeyne the Frence kynges wyne.”<sup>33</sup> His letter suggests that Herculean Henry VIII should “owerthrow and wressell with the saide Cardinall and his chaplans,” who are only servants of Catholic France, by the marriage of Henry VIII and Mary, Queen of Scots. The representations of Hercules illustrate the serious antagonism not only between Scotland’s pro-England Protestant faction and pro-French Catholic one, but also

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<sup>32</sup> Gordon Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII*, Edinburgh History of Scotland 3 (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1971) 48-49; Norman Macdougall, *James IV*, Stewart Dynasty in Scotland (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1989) 155; Jamie Cameron and Norman Macdougall, *James V: The Personal Rule, 1528-1542* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1998) 161-90; Pamela E. Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548-1560: A Political Career* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002) 13-14.

<sup>33</sup> Elder 8.

between Protestant England and Catholic France.

The hostile representation of the dynamic between Hercules-Protestantism and Hydra-Catholicism finally appears as a book title in 1588: *A View of the Romish Hydra and Monster, Traison, against the Lords Annointed*.<sup>34</sup> This book was written by Protestant Laurence Humphrey who was the Head of Magdalen College, Oxford. He converted to Protestantism in the reign of Edward VI, and during the reign of Queen Mary he was exiled to Switzerland. Since Humphrey probably lived with refugees such as John Bale and John Foxe in Basel, and they worked as a corrector and translator for the same publishing companies, the book title might have been influenced by Bale.<sup>35</sup> In the dedicatory epistle to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Humphrey states his intention to denounce “the Romish Religion two principall parts, and peremptorie pointes, corrupt Opinions, and outrageous Actions”: the Catholic doctrine is “pernicious,” and “the badge of Antichrist is bloody, ful of cruelty, voide of charity” because they plot to overthrow the government (sigs. \*2<sup>r</sup>-\*2<sup>v</sup>). Before the publication of *A View of the Romish Hydra and Monster*, Humphrey had asserted the ultimate authority of the ruler and the unquestioning obedience of people to their ruler, in “About the primacy of kings over the papacy and the obedience to be offered to magistrates,” the third section of his *De Religionis Conservatione et Reformatione Vera* (*The Preservation of Religion and Its True Reformation*) in 1559.<sup>36</sup> He repeated the same points in *A View of the Romish Hydra and Monster*, in which he calls

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<sup>34</sup> Laurence Humphrey, *A View of the Romish Hydra and Monster, Traison, against the Lords Annointed: Condemned by Daudi, I. Sam. 26. and Nowe Confuted in Seuen Sermons to Perswade Obedience to Princes, Concord among Our Selues, and a Generall Reformation and Repentaunce in All States: by L.H.*, STC (2nd ed.): 13966 (Oxford: 1588).

<sup>35</sup> Janet Karen Kemp, *Laurence Humphrey, Elizabethan Puritan: His Life and Political Theories*, Diss. West Virginia University, 1978 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1978) 11; John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) 422.

<sup>36</sup> Kemp 196. The English translation of *De Religionis Conservatione et Reformatione Vera* is in Kemp 168-227.

Roman Catholicism the “Monster of Rome, this Hydra. . . of many heades” (sig. \*2<sup>v</sup>).

Humphrey insists in *A View of the Romish Hydra and Monster* that the Catholics—as the “Popishe Hydra” or “bloud-suckers of Rome”—incited English people to sedition by using treasonable Roman strategies such as the Jesuit mission and the Pope’s Bull. These plans, he writes, constitute the vicious seven-headed Hydra (sigs. \*4<sup>v</sup>, \*7<sup>r</sup>). In this book, which included seven sermons against those seven sinful plots, Humphrey persuaded the English to believe in their own church, the Church of England, without falling into the Pope’s temptation to try to encourage the English to rebel against the Queen and the government. The main message his book conveyed was:

If wee deale thus duetifully towardes God, and obediently towardes our Prince, then will God mercifully and mightily defend both Prince and vs. No divelish witchcraft, no Ruffians dag or dagger, not invasion of forreiners, no craft or art of any enemies, no nor this seven-headed beast shall annoy Prince, Peare[sic], or People. (sig. \*7<sup>v</sup>)

Humphrey recommended that the English be passively obedient to their ruler. Even if the Hydra-like Roman Catholics plotted “the Massacres and murders of manie Honorable, & worthie men in manie places,” referring to the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, Humphrey did not permit English Protestants to attack Roman Catholics (sig. \*4<sup>v</sup>).<sup>37</sup>

The second reason why John Bale’s words, quoted above, are suggestive is that they show the confusion among Hercules and St. George, King Arthur, all of whom are dragon slayers. We can find here a circumstance specific to the English context which caused the representations of Hercules and Hydra in England to be entangled, even confused with the three types of heroes and dragons from quite different other sources.

Gerard Malynes, English writer on economics, in 1601 wrote *Saint George for*

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<sup>37</sup> The name of Hercules is not present in the text. However, Humphrey’s advocacy of passivity and moderation may suggest an explain for the absence of the warrior-hero.

*England, Allegorically Described*, a book which dissected and attacked the international money market.<sup>38</sup> His book was designed to improve the economical “welfare of the commonwealth” (sig. F6<sup>r</sup>). Malynes allegorised the misguided economic policy of the government as “a terrible cruel Dragon” or “hideous monster,” and he says that St. George does “rescue and save miraculously, delivering thereby the whole state of this commonwealth from the like danger” (sig. B3<sup>r</sup>). Malynes summarises his reasons for his use of this allegory by asserting that the “invented historie of S. George. . . may conveniently be applied to these our dayes of her Maiesties most happy government” (sigs. A2<sup>r</sup>-A2<sup>v</sup>). In other words, Malynes regards Queen Elizabeth, the nation’s saviour, as St. George.

Malynes is basically interested in economics, but, even so, in the first part of his study he offers a detailed discussion of the legendary background of St. George, in which he explains about the “terrible cruel Dragon.”<sup>39</sup> Malynes takes the Dragon to represent economic disorder as the first meaning, but he does not forget to add that the Dragon had been historically identified with “the cause of the ouerthrow of kingdomes, states, commonweales, . . . *rebellion* and variance in countries (emphasis added),” referring to Tacitus (sigs. A5<sup>v</sup>-A6<sup>r</sup>). In addition, interestingly, Malynes compares St. George’s conquering the Dragon with Hercules’ “killing the Serpent Hydras”: Queen Elizabeth who signifies both St. George and Hercules conquers a dragon or Hydra which represents economic disorder (sig. C4<sup>v</sup>).

This close connection between St. George and Hercules can be found elsewhere,

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<sup>38</sup> Gerard Malynes, *Saint George for England, Allegorically Described*, STC (2nd ed.): 17226a (London: 1601).

<sup>39</sup> For the genealogy of St. George, see Daniel Ogden, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 399-401, 402-04; Daniel Ogden, *Dragons, Serpents, and Slayers in the Classical and Early Christian Worlds: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) 247-56. See also Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012) 238-42.

signally, in Erasmus' highly influential *The Praise of Folly*. When the goddess Folly denounces Christian people who believe in superstitions, referring to the cults of various saints such as St. Christopher and St. Barbara, she points to a picture of St. George's horse:

in [St.] George they[the Christians]'ve found another Hercules. . . . They piously deck out his horse with trappings and amulets and practically worship it.<sup>40</sup>

Betty Radice, annotating the text, suggests that "another Hercules" is associated with "St George for killing the hydra as George killed the dragon."<sup>41</sup> This picture might provide proof that St. George was frequently associated with Hercules, and vice versa, in the age of Erasmus because these mythical heroes were famous dragon slayers.

We can see, then, that the St. George-Hercules representation was present in the Erasmian Humanistic tradition. However, the English representations are not as simple as they look—because St. George is not only a Patron Saint of England but also a patron of the Order of the Garter, which was inspired by the legend of King Arthur, a dragon slayer, and the Knights of the Round Table in the age of King Edward III.<sup>42</sup> Roy Strong points out that the legend of St. George is "integral for the myth of Elizabeth"; and Frances A. Yates also emphasises the importance of St. George for Queen Elizabeth (Fig. 2.10):<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice, ed. A. H. T. Levi, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 27 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) 114. This translation is from our contemporary, Betty Radice. Thomas Chaloner strangely did not translate a short passage mentioning St. George because the omitted passage had a nuance intending to mock St. George. Clarence H. Miller thinks that the reason for the omission is that Chaloner was a loyalist. As we will see later, Tudor monarchs, such as Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth, were compared to not only Hercules but also St. George. See the note of the text by Clarence H. Miller, ed., *The Praise of Folie*, by Desiderius Erasmus, trans. Thomas Chaloner, Early English Text Society 257 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) 162-63. Miller says, "*The Praise of Folly* was written in England, and there can be little doubt that Folly's remarks about St. George were intended primarily for English ears. Life-size statues of the saint, horse, dragon, and all, were not uncommon in important English churches."

<sup>41</sup> Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice, 477.

<sup>42</sup> Hugh E. L. Collins, *The Order of the Garter 1348-1461: Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 20-21.

<sup>43</sup> Roy C. Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977) 162. See also Thomas Dawson, *Memoirs of St George: The English Patron, and of the*

[Elizabeth] can be seen in the portrait at Hampton Court significantly pointing to the Garter badge of St. George and the Dragon which hangs on its blue ribbon round her neck; this was, after all, to wear the image of a saint in a Protestant country. Her position as head of the Order, which, with its Arthurian associations, had been made a vehicle for the glorification of the national monarchy established by the Tudors, was a very important aspect of her legend.<sup>44</sup>



Fig. 2.10. *Queen Elizabeth I Holding the Garter George*, Drawn by an Unknown Artist, c. 1575.<sup>45</sup>

Although Yates does not make the point explicitly, evidently the viewer must take the dragon to stand for its own subjection by a dragon slayer—otherwise the meaning of this portrait will remain unresolved.

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*Most Noble Order of the Garter* (London: 1714); Roy C. Strong, "Queen Elizabeth I and the Order of the Garter," *Archaeological Journal* 119 (1962) 245-69; Raymond B. Waddington, "Elizabeth I and the Order of the Garter," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24.1 (1993) 97-113.

<sup>44</sup> Frances A. Yates, "Elizabethan Chivalry: The Romance of the Accession Day Tilts," *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957) 23. On Elizabeth's adaptation of the Order of the Garter, see also, Stephen Hamrick, *The Catholic Imaginary and the Cults of Elizabeth, 1558-1582* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009) 41-45; Alison Chapman, *Patrons and Patron Saints in Early Modern English Literature*, Routledge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture 21 (London: Routledge, 2013) 29-32.

<sup>45</sup> Strong, *Cult* 163, 218.

The third reason why John Bale's words, with which this discussion opened, are suggestive is that we can see significant confusion between Hydra and dragons in England. English representations of Hydra seem to have been influenced by those of the dragons of Revelation.<sup>46</sup> The Geneva Bible, for example, describes the dragon as follows: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven: for beholde, a great red dragon having seven heades, and ten hornes, and seven crownes upon his heads" (Rev. 12.3).<sup>47</sup> This description is very similar to that of other translations such as Wycliffe's, Tyndale's, the Bishop's Bible, and the King James Bible.<sup>48</sup> In Revelation 13, another dragon appears:

And I sawe a beast rise out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten hornes, and upon his hornes were ten crownes, and upon his heads the name of blasphemie.

And the beast which I sawe, was like a leopard, and his fete like a beares, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: (Rev. 13.1-2)

The image of the beast with seven or ten crowned heads in Revelation was mixed with the representation of Hydra at the age of Shakespeare. For example, the confusion between the biblical beast and Hydra is shown in Edward Topsell's *The Historie of Serpents* in 1608 (Fig. 2.11)<sup>49</sup>:

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<sup>46</sup> Ewing 98-104.

<sup>47</sup> Lloyd E. Berry, ed., *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

<sup>48</sup> Luther Allan Weigle, ed., *The New Testament Octapla: Eight English Versions of the New Testament in the Tyndale-King James Tradition* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1962).

<sup>49</sup> Edward Topsell, *The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and Insects*, ed. Willy Ley, vol. 2, 3 vols. (London: Frank Cass, 1967) 735-36. This edition is an unabridged republication of the 1658 edition, which included Topsell's two works, *The Historie of Foure-Footed Beastes* in 1607, *The Historie of Serpents* in 1608, and Thomas Mouffet's *History of Insects* in 1658. Topsell was an Anglican clergyman and early natural historian. For his religious background, see Alan C. Jenkins, *The Naturalists: Pioneers of Natural History* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978) 22.



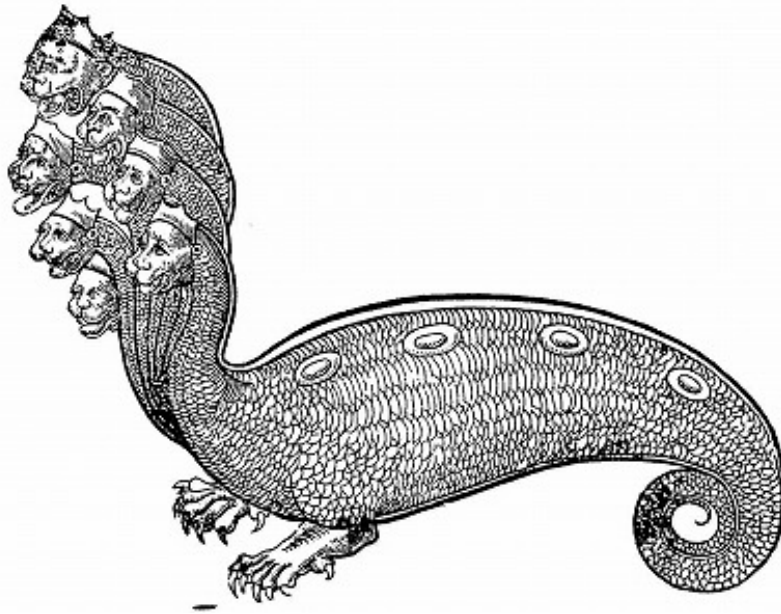


Fig. 2.11. “Of the Hydra Supposed to Be Killed by Hercules,” in Edward Topsell’s *The Historie of Serpents*, 1608.<sup>50</sup>

This book is about natural history, and collects pictures of many real and imaginary serpents. His description and its woodcut are a typical evocation of the dragons of Revelation and of Hydra, for in the section titled “Of the Hydra Supposed to Be Killed by Hercules” of the book, a woodcut of the seven crowned heads is found.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Topsell 736.

<sup>51</sup> This woodcut was reproduced from the following Latin book (Fig. 2.12): Conrad Gessner, *Conradi Gesneri Tigurni medicinae et philosophiae professoris in Schola Tigurina Historiae animalium libri V, qui est de serpentium natura. Ex variis schedis et collectaneis eiusdem compositus* (Tiguri: In officina Froschouiana, 1587) sig. l3<sup>r</sup>.

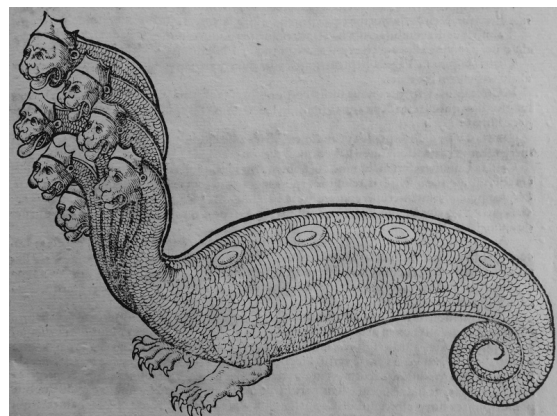


Fig. 2.12. “DE HYDRA MVLTCIPITE, FABVLOSA, QVAM HERCVLES CONFECIT,” in Conrad Gessner’s *Historiae animalium libri V*, 1587.

Here, we can summarise our discussion so far. The purpose of this chapter is to indicate that Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* shared, and used the Hercules representations to reflect contemporary preoccupations with religion and politics in the wake of the English Reformation. At the beginning of this chapter, we examined the confrontation between the Herculean King James and the multitude like "Hydra." This description can be found also in *Coriolanus*. The confrontation was in the tradition of Renaissance Humanism which travelled up from Italy to France and England historically and geographically; since France is located to the south of England, France was the starting point for the discussion. As the French examples clearly illustrate, the conflict reflected the religious antagonism between Protestantism and Catholicism. The same antagonism could be seen also in England, but the Reformation had made it complicated to comprehend the Hercules-Hydra representations in England, where monarchs were compared to Hercules, St. George, and King Arthur. As King James stated in his *Basilicon Doron*, the governmental policy towards the multitude and religion is fundamental to ruling the country. In this sense, the analyses of the Hercules-Hydra representations are essential to understand *Coriolanus*, late Tudor and early Stuart politics, and the religious policies of Renaissance Europe.

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The courtesy of the Wellcome Library. As Brian J. Ford points out, "Edward Topsell's *History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents* reproduced a host of cuts from Gesner [or Gessner], many of them reproduced directly, line for line": Brian J. Ford, *Images of Science: A History of Scientific Illustration* (London: The British Library, 1992) 61. On Gessner's Hydra, see Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen, *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2002) 308-10. Gessner who was a Protestant probably attempted to criticise Catholic French kings by this Hydra image which had crowns on their heads. Gessner's books were in a list of prohibited books by the Roman Catholic Church, *Index librorum prohibitorum*, and "placed on the *Index* in the category of authors all of whose works, past, present and future, were banned." See Sachiko Kusakawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature: Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012) 91; S. Kusakawa, "The Sources of Gessner's Pictures for the *Historia animalium*," *Annals of Science* 67.3 (2010) 303-28. For Gessner's religious background, Urs B. Leu, *Conrad Gesner als Theologe: Ein Beitrag zur Zürcher Geistesgeschichte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1990); Hans (Hanan) Wellisch, "Conrad Gessner: A Bio-Bibliography," *Journal of the Society of the Bibliography of Natural History* 7.2 (1975) 156: "Since he was a Zwinglian and had in his possession Protestant books and pamphlets he was in danger of being prosecuted by the Inquisition". Both Topsell, who was also a Protestant, and Gessner shared anti-Catholic sentiments. For Topsell's religious background, see Jenkins 22.

This chapter has tracked the course of the Hercules-Hydra relationship in Catholic versus Protestant thinking in France and England. However, here, we have to ascertain whether Shakespeare's Hercules-Hydra representations are like or significantly different from those of his English contemporaries. After the investigation of works by his contemporaries, we will discover that the representations reflecting social movements can be found in other writers' works as well as Shakespeare's. Among his contemporaries, it is perhaps not surprising that Edmund Spenser provides the best examples of the multilayered images of Hercules, St. George, King Arthur, Hydra, and dragons in England. Nobody can doubt Spenser's literary influence over Shakespeare's contemporaries. In addition, since, like Shakespeare's, Spenser's texts are from Protestant England, because of the sheer range of images, and because of their deep engagement with Protestant modes of thought, the multilayered images used in *The Faerie Queene* are the focus of the second part of this chapter.

It is not too much to say that Spenser's works are possessed by Hercules, Hydra, and dragons. As Spenser himself says in the letter to Walter Raleigh, the purpose of *The Faerie Queene* is:

to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceiued shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profite of the ensample: I chose the historye of king Arthure. . . . I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a braue knight, perfected in the twelue priuate morall vertues, as Aristotle hath deuised, the which is the purpose of these first twelue bookes.<sup>52</sup>

The number twelve, which recalls the division of the epic form into twelve books, is one of

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<sup>52</sup> Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, eds. A. C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita and Toshiyuki Suzuki, rev. 2nd. ed., Longman Annotated English Poets (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2007) 714-15.

the key words of the work, signifying Spenser's intention to write a twelve-volume work, King Arthur's twelve virtues, twelve "other knights the patrones, for the more variety of the history" including the knight of the Redcrosse or St. George in Book 1, and the Herculean twelve labours (716). The letter to Walter Raleigh, which is a clear expression of Spenser's intention, declares that the theme of killing dragons is at the centre of *The Faerie Queene*, for King Arthur, the knight of the Redcrosse or St. George, and Hercules are all dragon slayers. Spenser remarks "how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed"; and indeed the allegorical descriptions of the dragon slayers, especially in Book 1, embrace aspects of the various interpretations of Hercules-Hydra representations religiously and politically in Tudor England (714).

In Book 1, King Arthur and Una meet the giant Orgoglio and his mistress Duessa when they travel to rescue the knight of the Redcrosse or St. George. The giant gives Duessa "gold and purple pall to weare, / And triple crowne set on her head full hye, / And her endowd with royall maiestye: . . . A monstrous beast ybredd in filthy fen" (1.7.16.3-8). This beast is compared to Hydra as follows:

Such one it was, as that renowned Snake  
Which great *Alcides* in *Stremona* slew,  
Long fostred in the filth of *Lerna* lake,  
Whose many heades out budding euer new,  
Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew:  
But this same Monster much more vgly was;  
For seuen great heads out of his body grew,  
An yron brest, and backe of scaly bras,  
And all embrewd in blood, his eyes did shine as glas. (1.7.17.1-9)

Alcides is another name of Hercules, and "*Lerna* lake" is the habitat of Hydra.<sup>53</sup> This stanza suggests diverse interpretations of Duessa and her beast. Duessa as "a false

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<sup>53</sup> See John Upton, ed., *Spenser's Faerie Queene: A New Edition with a Glossary, and Notes Explanatory and Critical*, by Edmund Spenser, vol. 2, 2 vols. (London: J. and R. Tonson, 1758) 386.

sorceresse” (1.2.34.8) and “the daughter of Deceit and Shame” (1.5.26.9) who wears a “gold and purple pall” with “triple crowne” on her head, and sits astride the many-headed beast reminds us of the depiction in Revelation 17.3-6:

I sawe a woman sit upon a skarlat coloured beast, full of names of blasphemie, which had seven heads, & ten hornes.

And the woman was araied in purple & skarlat, & guilded with golde, & precious stones, and pearles, and had a cup of golde in her hand, ful of abominations, and filthines of her fornication.

And in her forehead was a name written, A mysterie, great Babylon, the mother of whoredomes, and abominations of the earth.

And I sawe the woman drunken with the blood of Saintes, & with the blood of the Martyrs of Iesus: & when I sawe her, I wondred with great marveile.

This image would have been well-known as the following woodcut by Holbein in 1523 and H. G. in 1618 shows (Figs. 2.13 and 2.14):



Fig. 2.13. “The Whore of Babylon,” Engraved by Hans Holbein the Younger, German New Testament, 1523.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Martin Luther, *Das neue Testament: klerlich auss dem rechten grundt Teütscht: Mit gargelerten*



Fig. 2.14. “The Crowned Bare-Breasted Whore of Babylon on the Seven-Headed, Ten-Horned Crowned Beast,” in H. G.’s *The Mirroure of Majestie*, 1618.<sup>55</sup>

This seven-headed beast is the beast of Revelation 12.3 and 13.1-3, but the combination of the beast and the whore implies at least two things. First, as dragon or beast slayers, King Arthur, Hercules, and God are similarly categorised. Second, the seven-headed beast is a symbol of Roman Catholicism: “seven heads” means “Rome,” according to the marginal

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vorreden, Und kurtzer ettlicher schwerer oertter ausslegung: Auch die offenbarung Joannis mit hübschen Figuren, auss welchen man das schwerest leichtlich verston kan: Darzuo ein Register, welchs anzeyget die Episteln und Evangelia wie sie das gantz Jar in der Kirchen gehalten werden (Basel: Thoman Wolff, 1523) sig. G iij<sup>v</sup>. The courtesy of Universitätsbibliothek Basel.

<<http://www.e-rara.ch/doi/10.3931/e-rara-5633>> For the information of this edition, see Frank Hieronymus, *Oberrheinische Buchillustration 2: Basler Buchillustration 1500-1545*, Universitätsbibliothek Basel, 31. März bis 30. Juni 1984 (Basel: Universitätsbibliothek Basel, 1984) 421-25. On this engraving by Holbein, see also, Ph. Schmidt, *Die Illustration der Lutherbibel, 1522-1700: Ein Stück abendländische Kultur- und Kirchengeschichte mit Verzeichnissen der Bibeln, Bilder und Künstler 400 Abbildungen* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt, 1962) 93-127; Erika Michael, “The Iconographic History of Hans Holbein the Younger’s “Icones” and Their Reception in the Later Sixteenth Century,” *Harvard Library Bulletin* 3.3 (1992) 32; Jennifer Spinks, “Reformation Visual Culture and Monstrous Births: Luther’s Monk Calf and Melanchthon’s Papal Ass,” *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, Religious Cultures in the Early Modern World 5 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009) 74-76.

<sup>55</sup> Peter M. Daly, Alan R. Young and Beert C. Verstraete, *The English Emblem Tradition: 4, William Camden, Remaines of a Greater Worke Concerning Britaine; H.G., The Mirroure of Maiestie; Otto van Veen, Amorum Emblemata*, Index emblematicus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 91. The European translations of Alciato regarded the image of the woman on the seven-headed beast as an emblem of “False Religion,” but only the Frankfurt edition in 1567 used it as a symbol of “False Worship.” See Peter M. Daly and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) n. pag., but this emblem is categorised as Emblem 6. See also the footnote of 1.7.16.4 by A. C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita and Toshiyuki Suzuki, eds., *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spenser, Longman Annotated English Poets, rev. 2nd. ed. (Harlow, England: Pearson Education, 2007).

gloss of Rev. 13.1 in the Geneva Bible, “because it was first gouerned by seven Kings or Emperours after Nero, and also is compassed about with seven mountaines.”<sup>56</sup> The whore of Babylon or Duessa “arayed in purple & skarlet, and gilded with golde, and precious stones, and pearles, and had a cup of gold in her hand” represents papal ostentation.

Duessa’s showy decorations are depicted also in 1.2.13:

He [Sans foy] had a faire companion of his way,  
 A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,  
 Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay,  
 And like a *Persian* mitre on her hed  
 She wore, with crowns and owches garnished,  
 The which her lauish louers to her gaue;  
 Her wanton palfrey all was ouerspred  
 With tinsell trappings, wouen like a waue,  
 Whose bridle rung with golden bels and bosses braue. (1.2.13.1-9)

This description of Duessa derives from that of the whore of Babylon in Revelation. The Geneva edition makes an annotation in the margin of the text of Rev. 17.4: “This woman is the Antichrist, that is, the Pope with the whole bodie of his filthie creatures. . . whose beautie onely standeth in outwarde pompe & impudencie and craft like a strumpet.”<sup>57</sup> The “mitre” or “triple crowne” in 1.7.16.4 indicates the papal tiara. Moreover, the Geneva gloss in Rev. 17.3 points out the brutality of the whore who signifies “the newe Rome which is the Papistrie, whose crueltie and blood shedding is declared by skarlat.”<sup>58</sup>

The image of the brutal Duessa, who represents the cruelty of the Roman Catholic, is also seen in 1.8.6.1-5:

And after him [the giant Orgoglio] the proud *Duessa* came,

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<sup>56</sup> See also the footnote of 1.7.17.7 by Hamilton, et al.

<sup>57</sup> See also the footnote of 1.2.13.2 by Hamilton, et al.

<sup>58</sup> See Upton 386; Edwin Greenlaw, Charles Grosvenor Osgood and Frederick Morgan Padelford, eds., *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spenser, *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, 11 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1932-38) 1.199. See also the footnote of 1.7.16-17 by Hamilton, et al.

High mounted on her many headed beast,  
And euery head with fyrie tongue did flame,  
And euery head was crowned on his creast,  
And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.

This description echoes Revelation above: “I sawe the woman drunken with the blood of Saintes, & with the blood of the Martyrs of Iesus: & when I sawe her, I wondred with great marueile” (17.6). However, it probably makes a topical allusion to the brutality of the Roman Catholic as in the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in 1578, or the executions by Spanish Alva’s Council of Blood in the Netherlands in 1567.<sup>59</sup> The cruelty of Duessa comes from “extorted powre, and borrow’d strength” (1.7.18.3), which implies that “papal tyranny usurps civil power.”<sup>60</sup> In addition, after Arthur defeated the many-headed beast, he entered a room of a castle to rescue the knight of the Redcrosse, and saw an appalling sight there:

There all within full rich arayd he found,  
With royall arras and resplendent gold,  
And did with store of euery thing abound,  
That greatest Princes presence might behold.  
But all the floore (too filthy to be told)  
With blood of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,  
Which there were slaine, as sheepe out of the fold,  
Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew,  
And sacred ashes ouer it was strowed new. (1.8.35.1-9)

The description of “royall arras and resplendent gold” must refer to papal ostentation, because the “bloud of guiltlesse babes” alludes to a Roman Catholic atrocity; though Hamilton annotates these phrases only as an allusion to Matt. 2.16: “Herod . . . slew all the male children that were in Beth-leem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two yeere old and

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<sup>59</sup> See the footnote of 1.8.6.2-5 by Hamilton, et al. On the allusion to the Roman Catholic church and its beast in the text, Anthea Hume, *Edmund Spenser: Protestant Poet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 91-96; John N. King, *Spenser’s Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990) 91-100. See also, Theresa M. Kelley, *Reinventing Allegory*, *Cambridge Studies in Romanticism* 22 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 41-42.

<sup>60</sup> See the footnote of 1.7.18.3 by Hamilton, et al; Upton 386.



vnder.”<sup>61</sup> Since the “innocents trew” are identified as “holy Martyres” in the next stanza (1.8.36.4), the phrase “sacred ashes ouer it” no doubt signifies the ashes of the Protestant martyrs who were burned at the stake during the reign of “Bloody Mary.”

Not only King Arthur but also the Redcrosse knight or St. George fights against a many-headed dragon:

Inflam’d with wrath, his raging blade he hefte,  
And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string  
Of his huge taile he quite a sonder cleft,  
Fiue ioints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him lefte. (1.11.39.6-9)

“Fiue ioints” literally indicates the five heads of the seven-headed beast, and the image derives from Revelation 17.9-10<sup>62</sup>:

The seven heads, are seven mountaines, whereon the woman sitteth: they are  
also seven Kings.  
Fiue are fallen, and one is, and another is not yet come. . . .

The seven-headed dragon against which St. George fights is associated with the Revelation dragon and Hydra because of its immortal heads. St. George is elsewhere compared to Hercules: Spenser describes St. George in agony at the battle against the dragon as the “great Champion of the antique world, / Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt, / And hath for *twelue huge labours* high extold” (1.11.27.1-3: emphasis added).

Thus, King Arthur killed the giant Orgoglio and the seven-headed dragon, and St. George slew almost the same dragon as Arthur and Hercules did. However, we here need to think of the implications in these episodes in terms of the Tudor context. For example, when Duessa saw the giant Orgoglio killed by Arthur, she threw away her Papal “triple crowne” of 1.7.16.4, and tried to run away: “Her golden cup she cast vnto the ground, / And

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<sup>61</sup> The footnote of 1.8.35.6.

<sup>62</sup> See also the footnote of 1.11.39.9 by Hamilton, et al.

crowned mitre rudely threw asyde” (1.8.25.2-3). Her behaviour implies the English Protestant victory over the Roman Catholics. If Duessa’s “crowned mitre” is a symbol of Roman Catholicism, the death of her lover, the giant Orgoglio, may signify the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

The relationship between Protestant England and Catholic Spain is repeatedly mentioned in the work, and some examples can be found at the battle between St. George and the many-headed dragon. Spenser directly compares the battle to the one “Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim king” (1.11.7.4), which historically or allegorically represent Queen Elizabeth and the Catholic Philip II of Spain.<sup>63</sup> This historical allegory is repeated in 1.12.18.8: “that proud Paynim king”; additionally, the English victory over the Spanish giant and dragon is also suggested in the scene of a ceremony to celebrate St.

George’s slaying the dragon:

Then gan triumphant Trompets sound on hye,  
That sent to heauen the ecchoed report  
Of their new ioy, and happie victory  
Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,  
And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.  
Then all the people, as in solemne feast,  
To him assembled with one full consort,  
Reioycing at the fall of that great beast,  
From whose eternall bondage now they were releast. (1.12.4.1-9)

This celebration scene from 1.12.4 to 1.12.13 might have been written when Spenser still had in mind Queen Elizabeth’s Coronation entry of 1559 and other pageantries.<sup>64</sup>

Moreover, interestingly, Spenser calls the people “a Monster of many heads” in the

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<sup>63</sup> The footnote of 1.11.7.2-6 by Hamilton, et al; Greenlaw, et al. 1.296; Upton 414.

<sup>64</sup> David M. Bergeron, “Pageants,” *The Spenser Encyclopedia*, eds. A. C. Hamilton, Donald Cheney, W. F. Blissett, David A. Richardson and William W. Barker (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 524-26; David M. Bergeron, “Elizabeth’s Coronation Entry (1559): New Manuscript Evidence,” *English Literary Renaissance* 8 (1978) 3-8. For Elizabeth’s Coronation entry, see Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation: Medieval Ceremony in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 146-72.

September Eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender*; and Spenser probably associates the “Monster of many heads” with Hydra.<sup>65</sup> In other words, Elizabeth was presented as a multilayered image of—Hercules, King Arthur, St. George, and God as a dragon slayer; and, correspondingly, the many-headed dragon or Hydra was also a multilayered image of the multitude, Roman Catholics, and Spain as the objects to be defeated.

We can find corroborating evidence in other examples of the connection uniting Rome, Spain, and Hydra here and there in a wide variety Tudor and early Stuart texts. Although our argument digresses awhile from the subject of Spenser, it is useful to cite the examples in order to deepen understanding of Spenser’s works. For instance, Fulke Greville states that Spanish Philip II’s widespread tyranny became “his seven-headed Hydra.”<sup>66</sup> John Gouws gives a commentary on the phrase: “Greville may have in mind the fact that, on one count at least, Spain was made up of seven kingdoms. The number seven appears to be associated in Greville’s mind with the Lernaean Hydra, and the seven-headed beast in Rev. 12.3, 13.1, 17.3 and 7.”<sup>67</sup> Moreover, William Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, as an official propagandist of James I, noted that the “Catholickes” caused “the frequent and Hydra-headed disturbances of her [Elizabeth’s] State and Person” in his *An Answer to a Catholike English-Man*, 1609.<sup>68</sup> Christopher Lever, religious writer and poet,

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<sup>65</sup> Edmund Spenser, *The Shepheardes Calender, The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, eds. William A. Oram, Einar Bjorvand, Ronald Bond, Thomas H. Cain, Alexander Dunlop and Richard Schell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 156. On Spenser’s view of the many-headed multitude, see Paul D. Green, “Spenser and the Masses: Social Commentary in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 35.3 (1974) 401-02.

<sup>66</sup> Fulke Greville, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke*, ed. John Gouws (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986) 63. See also Victor Skretkowitz, “Mary Sidney Herbert’s *Antonius*, English Philhellenism and the Protestant Cause,” *Women’s Writing* 6.1 (1999) 13.

<sup>67</sup> Greville 208.

<sup>68</sup> William Barlow, *An Answer to a Catholike English-Man (so by Himselfe Entitvled) Who, without a Name, Passed His Censure vpon the Apology Made by the Right High and Mightie Prince Iames by the Grace of God King of Great Brittain, France, and Ireland & amp; c. for the Oath of Allegiance: Which Censvre is Heere Examined and Refvted by the Bishop of Lincoln*, STC (2nd ed.): 1446.5 (London: 1609) sig. K3<sup>v</sup>.

says “the Soveraigntie of *Spaine*, which already (like *Hydra*) is become monstrous in largenesse; having united to that one body many heads many large dominions” in his patriotic anti-Catholic book, 1627.<sup>69</sup> Lodowick Lloyd, writer and courtier, also describes English Catholics in his *The Tragicocomedie of Serpents*, 1607, as follows:

Many [English Catholics] ran from great Brittain after such Gods, and such images, to *Rome*, to *Spaine*; and many yet lurkes like *Hydra* in *Larna*, in their secret labyrinths more greedy for the spoyle like moabites, than true catholikes for religion; these be the *Roman wolves* in sheeps clothing, like Camelions in al kind of colors, scattered over all England, these be the domesticall serpents, . . . : in Cities, in townes, yea, in our houses unknowne, and not unseene enemies. I meane those *rebels* and *Trators*.<sup>70</sup> (emphasis added)

Furthermore, an anonymous pamphleteer named “I.H.” (sometimes doubtfully identified as John Heath) published a small booklet which was inspired by the Gunpowder Plot, and this pamphleteer denounced the Roman Catholic Church for being divided into “Hydra-headed sect[s].”<sup>71</sup> I.H. in the small booklet unmasks “treason,” condemns “Treachery gainst state or King” by “Tygrish blood-sworne Iesuites, Spanized Brittish slaues” or “Papists,” and reports the rebellions by the multitude, incidental to the treason: “many headed multitude, / confused flocke together: / As though Devils, furies, grizly ghosts, / were all assembled thither.”<sup>72</sup> In other words, this pamphleteer thinks that the Jesuits, Spanish, Roman Catholic, and Hydra-like “many headed multitude” cause treasons and rebellions.

<sup>69</sup> Christopher Lever, *The History of the Defendors of the Catholique Faith*, STC (2nd ed.): 15537 (London: 1627) sig. P3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> Lodowick Lloyd, *The Tragicocomedie of Serpents*, STC (2nd ed.): 16631 (London: 1607) sigs. B2<sup>r</sup>-B2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> I. H., *The Diuell of the Vault: Or, The Vnmasking of Murther in a Briefe Declaration of the Cacolicke-Complotted Treason, Lately Discouerd*, STC (2nd ed.): 12568 (London: 1606) sig. C2<sup>r</sup>. See on “I. H.,” N. D. F. Pearce and Christopher Burlinson, “Heath, John (b. c.1585),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, Oxford University Press, 26 Oct. 2006 <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk:80/view/article/12838>>.

<sup>72</sup> I. H. sigs. A.2.<sup>r</sup>, B<sup>v</sup>, A4<sup>v</sup>, B<sup>v</sup>, C3<sup>r</sup>. The pamphleteer in the small booklet unmasks “treason” (sig. A.2.<sup>r</sup>) condemns “Treachery gainst state or King” (sig. B<sup>v</sup>) by “Tygrish blood-sworne Iesuites, Spanized Brittish slaves” (sig. A.4.<sup>v</sup>) or “Papists” (sig. B<sup>v</sup>), and reports the rebellions by the multitude, incidental to the treason: “many headed multitude, / confused flocke together: / As though Devils, furies, grizly ghosts, / were all assembled thither.” (sig. C3<sup>r</sup>).

To return to Spenser, these religious and political allegories can be found also in his early works. Spenser translated poems by Joachim du Bellay, a French poet. Du Bellay went to Rome as a secretary of his cousin Cardinal du Bellay, and wrote the forty-seven sonnets called *Les Antiquités de Rome* there in 1558. Spenser translated the sonnets into English as the *Ruines of Rome* in 1591. Since du Bellay was a Catholic, he did not openly criticise the Roman Church. However, he did lament the corruption of the papal court, and Rome herself in the sonnets. In the translation of the tenth sonnet of *Les Antiquités de Rome*, Spenser translates the description of Rome as a “brave Towne. . . fill[ed] with her renowned[sic] nourslings praise,” but now Rome is a city like “Hydra,” which needs Hercules to “represe” it.<sup>73</sup> Spenser again mentions degenerate Rome as a “great seven headed beast,” which refers to Revelation 13.1-2; and the Geneva Bible commentary makes an annotation upon the phrase “beast” in Daniel 7.7: “That is, the Romain empire which was a monster & colde not be compared to anie beast, because the nature of none was able to expresse it.”<sup>74</sup>

We have seen, then, that the different points of view, for example, Protestant or Catholic, English or French affected the different usages of the representations of Hercules and Hydra. The important thing is that French du Bellay was a Catholic, and English Spenser was a Protestant. Du Bellay used the Hydra metaphor as a means just to lament the corruptions of Roman Catholicism, but Spenser utilised it as a means to radically denounce the Roman Church. However, even if the situations were different, the

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<sup>73</sup> Edmund Spenser, *Ruines of Rome: By Bellay, The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, eds. Edwin Greenlaw, Charles Grosvenor Osgood, Frederick Morgan Padelford and Ray Heffner, vol. 8, 11 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1947) 144-45. See also Rees 290-91.

<sup>74</sup> W. L. Renwick, ed., *Complaints*, by Edmund Spenser (London: The Scholartis Press, 1928) 192. See also Edmund Spenser, *The Ruines of Time, The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, eds. Edwin Greenlaw, Charles Grosvenor Osgood, Frederick Morgan Padelford and Ray Heffner, vol. 8, 11 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1947) 39, 287.

Hercules-Hydra representations had been always closely connected with religious and political propaganda for the existing structure: in each case the dominant sector of society adopted for itself the image of Hercules, and used the comparison with Hydra for those sections of society perceived as threatening.

In order to clarify the iconological meaning hidden beneath the political representations of Hercules and Hydra in England, let us note the table known as Item 10632 in the Inventory of Henry VIII: “Item a Table with the picture of kynge henrye theight standinge uppon a Myter with three crownes havinge a Sarpent with seven headdes commynge oute of it and havinge a sworde in his hande wherein is written Verbum Dei (The word of God).”<sup>75</sup> Our exploration in this chapter makes it possible to elucidate its underlying meaning: Godly Henry VIII as a Protestant king represented the multiplied figure of Hercules, King Arthur, St. George, and God; and the “Sarpent” signified the multilayered monster of the Revelation dragon and Hydra, which represented the Pope, Roman Catholicism, and the many-headed multitude to be subdued by Henry VIII. Additionally, the image of Henry VIII and Edward VI crushing the Roman Hydra underfoot that we found in Bale’s book is appropriate for a piece of Protestant propaganda, and the representation of Henry VIII in his “Inventory” seems likely to have played the same role.

Finally, as argued earlier, we should not forget that these representations were deeply rooted in the Humanistic tradition. Thomas Chaloner, the Humanist, who translated Erasmus’ *The Praise of Folly* analyses the multitude in his Latin poem, glorifying Henry VIII’s political achievements, entitled *In Laudem Henrici Octavi (In Praise of Henry the*

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<sup>75</sup> David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII*, MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419 (London: Harvey Miller, 1998) 238.

*Eight*). In the poem, Chaloner admires Henry VIII's policy towards the "inconstant subjects. . . that beast, the commons" and describes the multitude as being "savage even than beasts."<sup>76</sup> Chaloner (and probably Henry) thinks that it is important to tame the unstable beast-like multitude for the stability in England: "The prudent Henry understood from long experience whither the mob, foul beast, will hurl itself unless the tenor of the law be exactly preserved by a strong defender. . . . Therefore he thought it better that the people should be bound by fear (and thus the mob, which rashly changes its ways from hour to hour, would keep its place through the dread of harsh punishment) than that they should love him momentarily for indulging their faults and become that much more faulty."<sup>77</sup> The important thing is that Chaloner was a translator of Erasmus, who clearly connected the multitude with Hydra: when Chaloner mentioned the beast-like multitude, he must have had the image of the Hydra-like multitude. Furthermore, Chaloner could have plausibly had a mental picture of Henry VIII as a slayer of Hydra.

This chapter has shown that the Hercules-Hydra representations were not just rhetorical expressions used to stress the robustness with which Coriolanus subdues the Roman Hydra-headed multitude. Did Shakespeare describe Coriolanus as Herculean because Coriolanus was sturdy and full of valour like Hercules? The evidence examined here suggests that the answer is "No." It is because Herculean rulers were in vogue in European countries such as England and France, and Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* was affected by the Humanist tradition which rediscovered the mythical hero, and the real politics which dealt with the violent multitude and religious confusion in Europe. This chapter explored the Protestant and Catholic uses of Hercules. However, we have not

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<sup>76</sup> Thomas Chaloner, *Thomas Chaloner's In laudem Henrici Octavi*, trans. John Gabel and Carl C. Schlam, eds. John B. Gabel and Carl C. Schlam (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1979) 51, 55.

<sup>77</sup> Chaloner 59.

discussed the reasons why Hercules was used or chosen for these monarchical representations. Therefore, in the next chapter, we have to examine at length this cardinal question, and the investigation of the reasons will be extremely useful for deepening our understanding of *Coriolanus*.



## Chapter 3

### The Eloquent Hercules

Why did the European monarchs compare themselves to Hercules? We have already suggested that it was not simply because of Hercules's fame as a mythical hero. The processes of adoption and uses of the figure have not been fully scrutinised by critics, perhaps because of a preconception that the association of the heroic kings or queens with the heroic Hercules was quite natural. The next two chapters investigate this fundamental question. We shall discover that the answer is based upon two Herculean qualities: "eloquence" and "virtue" both of which are indispensable to monarchs' rule over their countries. We assign this chapter to Herculean eloquence, and the next to Herculean virtue. The separation of the two topics reflects the fact that they usually appear separately both in texts and images, and rarely coexist in a Herculean image. This is because the sources of the two attributes belong to different ages, as we will see later.

Before we explain the procedure of this chapter, we need to discuss eloquence in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, because a comparison between Herculean Coriolanus and real European monarchs is essential in answering the following two questions of this chapter: "Why was Hercules chosen as such a significant monarchical representation in Europe?" and "Does Coriolanus possess the characteristics of monarchical eloquence associated with the figure of Hercules?" For all that Coriolanus was never a ruler, nevertheless, his attempts to grab power display some features of a monarchical attitude. We should not

forget that to govern Rome the office of consulship was devised, and that “supreme power was shared between two consuls. . . who convened the senate and assemblies, administered the law and finances, and commanded the armies and provinces.”<sup>1</sup>

The obsession Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* shows with images of tongue and mouth is directly connected with the theme of eloquence. Coriolanus calls the Roman plebeians “the many-headed multitude” (2.3.17) because of their “giddy” characteristics (1.1.268): the plebeians are a monster with many tongues like Hydra with its nine tongues. Furthermore, Coriolanus depicts the agitational and seditious tongue of the tribune as the “multitudinous tongue” (3.1.159: emphasis added) and the “lying tongue” (3.3.75: emphasis added). On the other hand, the heroic Coriolanus contrasts sharply with the clamorous multitude in terms of the tongue and mouth imagery because Coriolanus’ tongue represents sincerity in his words and actions. Menenius describes Coriolanus’ stubbornness as follows: “His nature is too noble for the world. / . . . His heart’s his *mouth*. / What his breast forges, that his *tongue* must vent, / And, being angry, does forget that ever / He heard the name of death” (3.1.255-60: emphasis added). Coriolanus’ inflexibility, moreover, is characterised by a hatred of flattery. Of course, it is Coriolanus’ inflexible tongue that brings tragedy upon him. Coriolanus regarded himself as comparable to Hercules, but the play makes it clear that, seen in relation to Hercules, he specifically lacks Herculean eloquence—a quality the play presents as essential for leaders. The lack of eloquence to move or flatter the

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Dillon and Lynda Garland, *Ancient Rome: From the Early Republic to the Assassination of Julius Caesar* (London: Routledge, 2005) 1-2. Livy in his *The Romane Historie* translated by Philemon Holland in 1600 says: “the first Consuls had the same absolute authoritie, held all the former roialties, and retained still the regall ensignes and ornaments of supreme dignitie.” Titus Livy, *The Romane Historie*, trans. Philemon Holland, STC (2nd ed.):16613 (London: Adam Islip, 1600) fol. 44. See also Livy, *History of Rome: Books I-II*, trans. B. O. Foster, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988) 2.1.7: “All the rights of the kings and all their insignia were possessed by the earliest consuls”; Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 10-11; David Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2005) 8-9.

multitude ultimately causes Coriolanus' death.

In order to fully elucidate the implications of eloquence, or lack of it, in *Coriolanus*, this chapter discusses French, not English, examples of the eloquent Hercules first because of the specific qualities of the Gallic Hercules. In the discussion, we shall examine the representation of the oratorical Gallic Hercules in Henri II's Royal Entry into Paris in 1549, and find that there were two roots of the Gallic Hercules: the tale of "Heracles" by Lucian of Samosata, Greek satirist, and a watercolour picture by Albrecht Dürer. Lucian's highly influential tale was translated later into Latin by Erasmus.<sup>2</sup> Humanists such as Erasmus and Agrippa regarded the eloquent Hercules as an icon of the age. The glorification of the eloquent Hercules is shown, for instance, in Alciato's emblem books which were influenced by Erasmus' *Adages* and published in many European countries. The first root of the Gallic Hercules is literary, via Erasmus, and the second root is visual, via Dürer whose watercolour picture expresses how people confusedly understood the representation. The investigation of the picture clarifies the meaning of the Gallic Hercules in Henri II's Royal Entry: Henri II's Hercules is a hybrid god made up of both Hercules and Mercury.

Next, our discussion moves to England to trace the English representations of an eloquent Hercules. In England as on the Continent, the representation of the hybrid god was in wide circulation, and many intellectuals, such as George Puttenham and Thomas Wilson, mention it in their works. The English versions of "eloquent Hercules," we shall see, inherited their characteristics from European Humanism. Moreover, in England, an overtly oratorical Hercules was used in the Martin Marprelate controversy by pamphleteers such as Gabriel Harvey, John Lyly, Thomas Nashe, and Robert Greene. We shall show

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<sup>2</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, "Praefatio, sev Hercvles Gallicvs," *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami: recognita et adnotatione critica instructa notisque illustrata*, ed. Christopher Robinson, Ord. 1. T. 1. (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1969) 591-93.

that the representation was deep-rooted in politics and religion. Following this, in order to trace Humanistic aspects of the English Hercules, we turn to a title page and printer's mark of Harvey's *Rhetor* in 1577.<sup>3</sup> The design of the printer's mark is a serpent coiled around a stick, reminding us of Mercury's caduceus. The design indicates the hybridity of Hercules and Mercury, and reveals some traces of Renaissance Humanism.

The Gallic Hercules holds a key to the implications of Herculean eloquence. The term "Gallic Hercules" derives from an ancient cult of Hercules in Gaul, an ancient region of Western Europe that included what is now northern Italy and France and Belgium and part of Germany and the Netherlands.<sup>4</sup> As the epithet "Gallic" suggests, the representations are found frequently in France. In France, successive kings tried to persuade people to identify the kings themselves with the Gallic Hercules. For example, Henri II skilfully exploited the image of the Gallic Hercules in the Royal Entry into Paris on 16 June, 1549:

The ceremony began at eight o'clock in the morning, when all the corporations of the city marched in procession out of the city, and the king, the princes of the blood, the great lords and ladies, and the principal royal officials gathered outside the walls to review them. . . . The number of clergy and university participants was so great that it took until eleven o'clock for the last of the representatives of the Parisian guilds—most of them making their debut in a Parisian entry—to reach the stage.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Gabriel Harvey, *Gabrielis Harveii Rhetor, vel duorum dierum oratio, de natura, arte, & exercitatione rhetorica*, STC (2nd ed.): 12904.5 (London: Henrici Binneman, 1577).

<sup>4</sup> On the Gallic Hercules, see Corrado Vivanti, "Henry IV, the Gallic Hercules," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967) 176-97; Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975) 210; Roy C. Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1984) 24-25, 71, 171; Lawrence M. Bryant, "Politics, Ceremonies, and the Embodiments of Majesty in Henry II's France," *European Monarchy: Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times*, eds. Heinz Duchhardt, Richard A. Jackson and David Sturdy (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992) 127-54; S. Annette Finley-Croswhite, *Henry IV and the Towns: The Pursuit of Legitimacy in French Urban Society, 1589-1610* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 57.

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence M. Bryant, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual and Art in the Renaissance*, Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance 216 (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1986) 52-53.

There were some Triumphal arches through which the king passed, and one of them had the design of the king as the Gallic Hercules (Fig. 3.1):

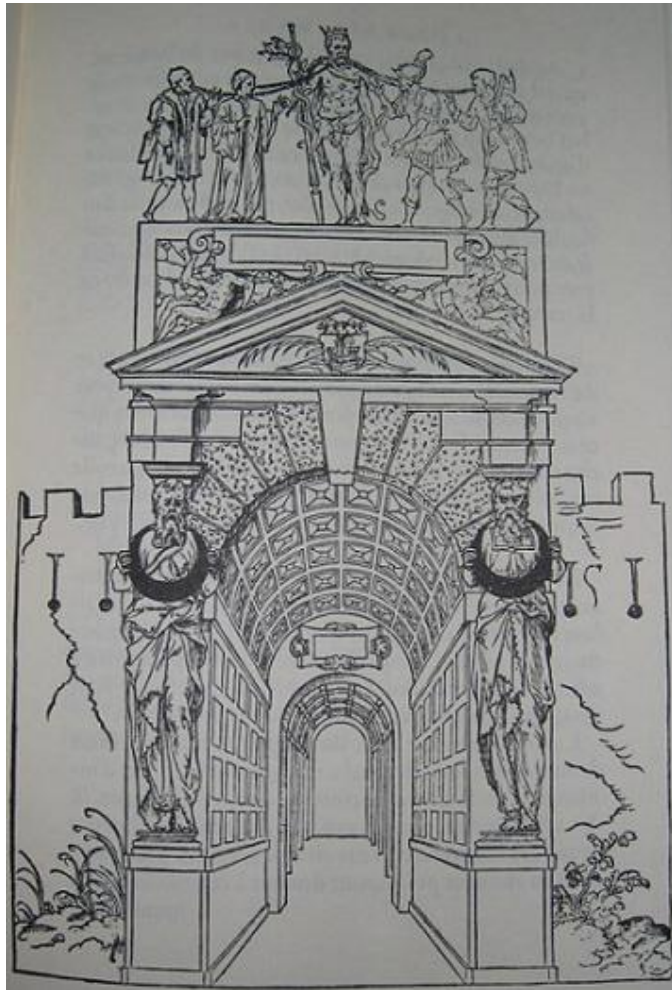


Fig. 3.1. Triumphal Arch of Henri II's 1549 Entry into Paris.<sup>6</sup>

French royal entry ceremonies were organised from the fourteenth through to the seventeenth centuries at the time of a new king's first visit to the kingdom's cities. The ceremony had the important function of introducing and highlighting political concepts for the people of the city; in other words, this theatrical opportunity could be called a kind of the mass media communication to announce his policy.<sup>7</sup> Why, then, did Henri II choose

<sup>6</sup> I. D. McFarlane, ed, *The Entry of Henri II into Paris, 16 June 1549*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies 7 (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982) sig. a iiiif.

<sup>7</sup> Bryant 5-19. See also, Hélène Visentin and Nicolas Russell, *French Ceremonial Entries in the Sixteenth Century: Event, Image, Text*, Essays and Studies 11 (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2007).

this allegory at the time of a significant opportunity for propaganda for the masses? Some possibilities can be considered. First, as I. D. McFarlane puts it, “the exploitation of the *Hercule gaulois* theme could be conveniently harmonized with the myth of the Trojan origins of French monarchy; and this would not only suggest a glorious past, but also give France a cultural and historical precedence over Rome.”<sup>8</sup> Second, the esteem of the French royal families held for Rome is connected to the cult of Rome among European Humanists; and McFarlane writes that “Hercules had acquired a special appeal for French humanists.”<sup>9</sup>

The following picture is the enlarged part of the top of the arch for Henri II’s 1549 Entry into Paris above, and it demonstrates to us that Hercules did appeal to French Humanists (Fig. 3.2).

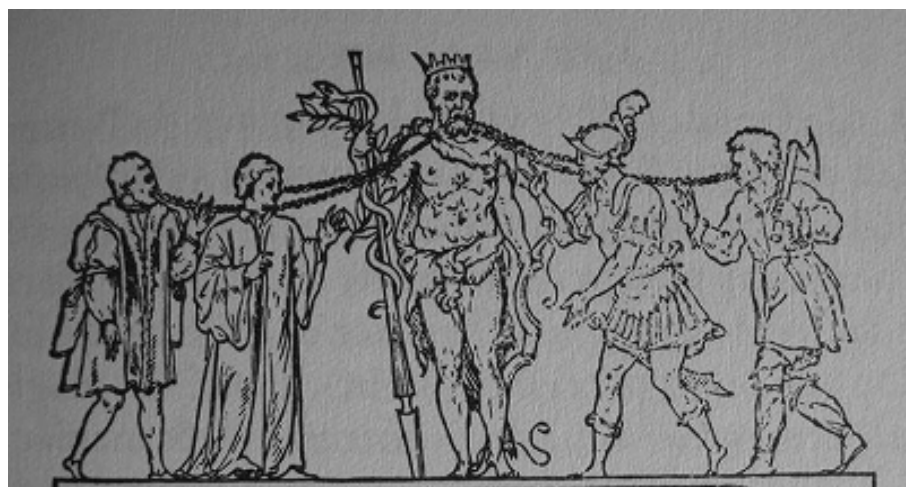


Fig. 3.2. Enlarged Part of Fig. 3.1.

<sup>8</sup> McFarlane 28. For the major themes of the Entry, see McFarlane, 28-35. On the Trojan origins of the French monarchy, see Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* 130-33; Jacques Abelard, *Les illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye de Jean Lemaire de Belges: Etude des éditions, genèse de l'oeuvre*, Publications romanes et françaises 140 (Geneve: Lebrairie Droz, 1976); Judy Kem, *Jean Lemaire de Belges's Les illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye: The Trojan Legend in the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*, Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures 15 (New York: Peter Lang, 1994); Marc-René Jung, *La légende de Troie en France au moyen âge: Analyse des versions françaises et bibliographie raisonnée des manuscrits* (Basel: Francke Verlag, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> McFarlane 29.

French people, or at least French intellectuals at that time, could decode various meanings of the representation, but we need a key. The tongue of Hercules leads to the ears of the four persons who represent the four social estates: “the Church, nobility, *conseil* in a long robe, and *labeur*, dressed as a vintner”; and they are “described as walking freely with outstretched hands towards the Gallic Hercules.”<sup>10</sup> If the tongue that leads to the ears of the people is not that of Hercules but, rather, of Hermes or Mercury, the representation raises no questions; for Hermes is the god of oratory or eloquence. However, it was the figure of Hercules that appeared on the arch. The Gallic reception of Hercules seems to have been twisted somewhere in the history.

One key to understanding the Gallic Hercules is eloquence, a quality emphasised by the Renaissance Humanists including Erasmus. The attribute of eloquence is found in both Lucian’s story and Dürer’s picture.

Lucian claims to have seen Ogmius, the Celtic god, during his journey to Gaul, and he describes Ogmius as a robust old man with club and bow, clad in a lion’s skin like Hercules.<sup>11</sup> Lucian mentions the gifts of oratory possessed by the Celtic god:

That old Heracles of theirs drags after him a great crowd of men who are all tethered by the ears! His leashes are delicate chains fashioned of gold and amber, resembling the prettiest of necklaces. Yet, though led by bonds so weak, the men do not think of escaping, as they easily could. . . . In fact, they follow cheerfully and joyously. . . . But let me tell you without delay what seemed to me the strangest thing of all. Since the painter had no place to which he could attach the ends of the chains, as the god’s right hand already held the club and his left the bow, he pierced the tip of his tongue and represented him drawing the men by that means! Moreover, he has his face

<sup>10</sup> Daniel S. Russell, “Emblematics and Cultural Specificity: Two Examples from Sixteenth-Century France,” *Emblematic Perceptions: Essays in Honour of William S. Heckscher on the Occasion of His Ninetieth Birthday*, eds. Peter M. Daly and Daniel S. Russell, *Saecula spiritalia* 36 (Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 1997) 149.

<sup>11</sup> Lucian, “Heracles,” trans. A. M. Harmon, *Lucian*, vol. 1, 7 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1913) 1; Michael Wintroub, “Civilizing the Savage and Making a King: The Royal Entry Festival of Henri II (Rouen, 1550),” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 29.2 (1998) 480-81; Vivanti 184-85.

turned toward his captives, and is smiling. . . . [N]o doubt a scholar from the native standpoint, said: "I will read you the riddle of the picture, stranger, as you seem to be very much disturbed about it. We Celts do not agree with you Greeks in thinking that Hermes is Eloquence: we identify Heracles with it, because he is far more powerful than Hermes. . . ." <sup>12</sup>

This story seems to be the start of the confusion between Hercules and Hermes or Mercury in the Renaissance, since, as Roy Strong points out, Lucian's "Ogmios," or "Heracles" had been "unknown to the middle ages." <sup>13</sup>

Lucian's "Heracles" played a significant role in Renaissance Humanism. Erasmus and Thomas More jointly translated the 32 tales of Lucian into Latin, and these two shared a similar Lucianic sense of humour or satirical bent. <sup>14</sup> Lucian's texts are characterised by a sense of humour, "satire of society, . . . vice and hypocrisy"; those who possess "an ironic temper will derive the most pleasure from Lucian," and "Erasmus was such a man; hence his fondness for the writings of the author." <sup>15</sup> As J. A. K. Thomson points out, "the great contribution of Erasmus to European culture is this, that he brought back irony into literature"; Erasmus shared Lucian's irony and humour in his *The Praise of Folly*, which was, Thomson asserts, "indisputably the best of the many Lucianic compositions of the age." <sup>16</sup> These translations of Lucian were highly influential in Renaissance literature.

Just as Erasmus' *Adages* reintroduced Horace's description of the many-headed

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<sup>12</sup> Lucian 3-4.

<sup>13</sup> Strong, *Art and Power* 24.

<sup>14</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Luciani compluria opuscula ab Erasmo et Thoma Moro interpretibus optimis in latinorum linguam traducta, Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami: recognita et adnotatione critica instructa notisque illustrata*, Ord. 1. T. 1. (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1969) 382-627. See also, Erika Rummel, "A Friendly Competition: More's and Erasmus' Translations from Lucian," *Erasmus as a Translator of the Classics*, Erasmus Studies 7 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) 49-69; Craig R. Thompson, *The Translations of Lucian by Erasmus and St. Thomas More* (Ithaca, NY: Vail-Ballou Press, 1940) 1-5; Albert Hyma, *The Life of Desiderius Erasmus* (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1972) 62; Lorne Campbell, Margaret Mann Phillips, Hubertus Schulte Herbruggen and J. B. Trapp, "Quentin Matsys, Desiderius Erasmus, Pieter Gillis and Thomas More," *The Burlington Magazine* 120.908, Special Issue Devoted to Portraiture and Britain (1978) 720. "Heracles" was translated by Erasmus. For Lucian's influence on Erasmus, see Christopher Robinson, *Lucian and His Influence in Europe* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979) 165-97.

<sup>15</sup> Thompson 1.

<sup>16</sup> J. A. K. Thomson, "Erasmus in England," *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* 9 (1932) 67, 1.



multitude to Renaissance intellectuals, the publication of Erasmus' Latin translation of Lucian's "Heracles" in 1506 "precipitated that fashionable vogue of the image in the 16th century which made it a commonplace symbol of humanist eloquence."<sup>17</sup> The image of the eloquent Hercules "seems to have been unknown in the Middle Ages" but the publication was a "landmark in the transformation of Hercules from the image of a barbarian to an avatar of humanist ideals of civilization."<sup>18</sup>

In fact, not only Lucian but also Hercules was a literary hero for the Renaissance Humanists, and indeed Erasmus and Agrippa identified themselves with Hercules. In his *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences*, Agrippa asks his readers: "Wil not this my enterprise (studious Reader) seeme unto thee valiant and adventurous, and almoste comparable to the attampes of *Hercules*, to take up weapons against all that Giaunt force of Sciences and Artes, and to chalenge into the felde all theese moste hardie hunters of Artes and Sciences?"<sup>19</sup> Erasmus also thinks in his *Adages* that "the epithet 'Herculean' . . . seems to belong in the highest degree to those at least who devotes their efforts to restore the monuments of ancient and true literature," and he regards "this collection of adages" as a Herculean effort.<sup>20</sup> Hans Holbein the Younger, who portrayed Erasmus, compared Erasmus' hard work to Herculean labours, and inscribed the Greek letters, ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΟΙ

<sup>17</sup> Edgar Wind, "'Hercules' and 'Orpheus': Two Mock-Heroic Designs by Dürer," *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 2.3 (1939) 217.

<sup>18</sup> Vivanti 185; Wintroub 480. See also Robert E. Hallowell, "Ronsard and the Gallic Hercules Myth," *Studies in the Renaissance* 9 (1962) 243: "in Lucian's portrait and in its Renaissance imitations the Gallic Hercules is the god of inspired eloquence"; William C McDonald, "Maximilian I of Habsburg and the Veneration of Hercules: On the Revival of Myth and the German Renaissance," *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6.1 (1976) 139-54; Freyr Roland Varwig, "Raffaels Herakles 'Ogmios': Ein Paradigma zur Ikonologie des sprachlichen Wohlklanges," *AINITMA: Festschrift für Helmut Rahn*, ed. Freyr Roland Varwig (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1987) 35-47; Dietmar Till, "Der 'Hercules Gallicus' als Symbol der Eloquenz: Zu einem Aspekt frühneuzeitlicher Rhetorikikonographie," *Artibus: Kulturwissenschaft und deutsche Philologie des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit, Festschrift für Dieter Wuttke zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Stephan Füssel, Gert Hübner and Joachim Knappe (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994) 249-74.

<sup>19</sup> Agrippa 6.

<sup>20</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, II vii 1 to III iii 100*, trans. R. A. B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 34 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 170-71, III i 1.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΟΙ ΠΟΝΟΙ (Herculean labours), in the picture (Figs. 3.3 and 3.4):



Fig. 3.3. *Portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam*, Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1523.<sup>21</sup>



Fig. 3.4. ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΟΙ ΠΟΝΟΙ (Herculean Labours), from the Enlarged Part of Fig. 3.3.

A key reason why the Renaissance Humanists revived Hercules as an ideal of Humanism is that Hercules was the embodiment of the eloquent oratory on which they placed great importance. The famous Italian Humanist Lorenzo Valla wrote: “Oratory is

<sup>21</sup> Hans Holbein the Younger, *Holbein: The Paintings of Hans Holbein the Younger, Complete Edition*, ed. John Rowlands (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1985) 128, plate 26.

called the queen of things.’<sup>22</sup> Renaissance Humanism opposed eloquence to the artificially pedantic Scholasticism of the Middle Ages. For example, Petrarch attacked the philosophy of the Schools in his *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia* (*On His Own Ignorance and That of Many Others*), but he did not direct his criticism at all of Scholastic and Aristotelian doctrine; the brunt of his criticism fell on the traces of eloquence in Aristotle’s works.<sup>23</sup> Petrarch recognised the value of “Ciceronian eloquence”: “I shall not conceal how much pleasure I take in Cicero’s intellect and eloquence”; “If admiring Cicero means being a Ciceronian, then I am a Ciceronian. For certainly I admire him, and I marvel at others who do not admire him.”<sup>24</sup> This Petrarchan or Humanistic tradition stressing the importance of eloquence was handed down to Valla and Erasmus, who also valued Ciceronian eloquence highly.<sup>25</sup>

The connection between the influence of Lucian through Erasmus’ translation and the orator image of Hercules in Renaissance Europe is shown, for instance, in Alciato’s emblem books (Figs. 3.5 and 3.6):

<sup>22</sup> Laurentius Valla, *Opera omnia*, ed. Eugenio Garin, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Torino: Bottega d’Erasmus, 1962) 960, bk II, ch. 39: “Oratoria uero, quae regina rerum est”; Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance*, rep. ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966) 33-34. See also, Jerrold E. Seigel, “Lorenzo Valla and the Subordination of Philosophy to Rhetoric,” *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism: The Union of Eloquence and Wisdom, Petrarch to Valla* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968) 137-69; John Monfasani, “Humanism and Rhetoric,” *Language and Learning in Renaissance Italy: Selected Articles*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, England: Variorum, 1994) 186.

<sup>23</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia* (*On His Own Ignorance and That of Many Others*), trans. David Marsh, *Invectives*, The I Tatti Renaissance library 11 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003) 233, 315; another English translation is in Francesco Petrarca, *On His Own Ignorance and That of Many Others*, trans. Hans Nachod, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948) 53-54, 103-04. On Humanistic eloquence in Petrarca, see Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963) 1. See also Hanna H. Gray, “Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence,” *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 24.4 (1963) 497-514. This essay is reprinted in Paul Oskar Kristeller and Philip P. Wiener, eds., *Renaissance Essays: From the Journal of the History of Ideas*, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper & Row, 1968) 199-216.

<sup>24</sup> Petrarca, (2003), 333, 331; Petrarca, (1948), 115, 114.

<sup>25</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Paraclesis*, trans. John C. Olin, *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Selected Writings of Erasmus, with the Life of Erasmus by Beatus Rhenanus* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1975) 93.



Fig. 3.5. “The Gallic Hercules,” Augsburg, 1531.<sup>26</sup>

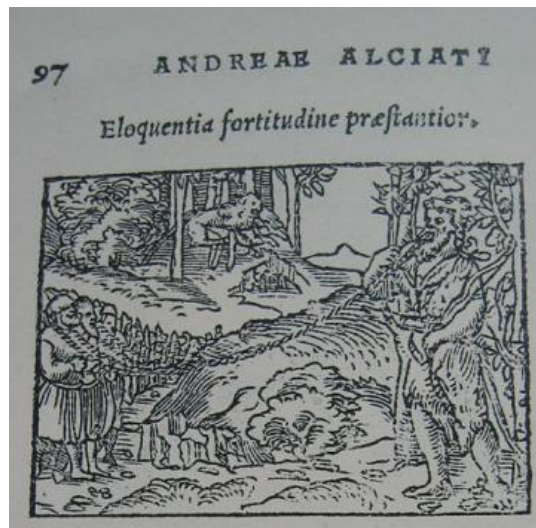


Fig. 3.6. “The Gallic Hercules,” Paris, 1534.<sup>27</sup>

As indicated by the Latin motto “Eloquentia fortitudine praestantior (Eloquence more powerful than strength),” these woodcuts represent the superiority of oratory over military force. Moreover the epigram supplements this motto and corresponds to Lucian’s fable: “Arms yield to the toga, and he [Hercules] whose strength is in eloquence draws even the hardest hearts to his wishes.”<sup>28</sup> The following woodcut of the Gallic Hercules, too,

<sup>26</sup> Henry Green, ed., *Andreae Alciati Emblematum fontes quatuor: Namely, an Account of the Original Collection Made at Milan, 1522, and Photo-Lith Fac-Similes of the Editions, Augsburg 1531, Paris 1534, and Venice 1546*, The Holbein Society’s Facsimile Reprints 4 (Manchester: A. Brothers, 1870) n. pag.

<sup>27</sup> Green 97. See also Peter M. Daly and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) Emblem 181.

<sup>28</sup> Peter M. Daly, Virginia W. Callahan and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 1, the Latin Emblems, Indexes and Lists* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) Emblem 181. See also Andrea Alciato, *Emblemata: Lyons, 1550*, eds. Betty I. Knott and John Manning (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1996) 194.

suggests that the representation was due to the influence of Erasmus, for it was engraved by Ambrosius Holbein, elder brother of Hans Holbein the Younger who painted Erasmus (Figs. 3.7 and 3.8)<sup>29</sup>:

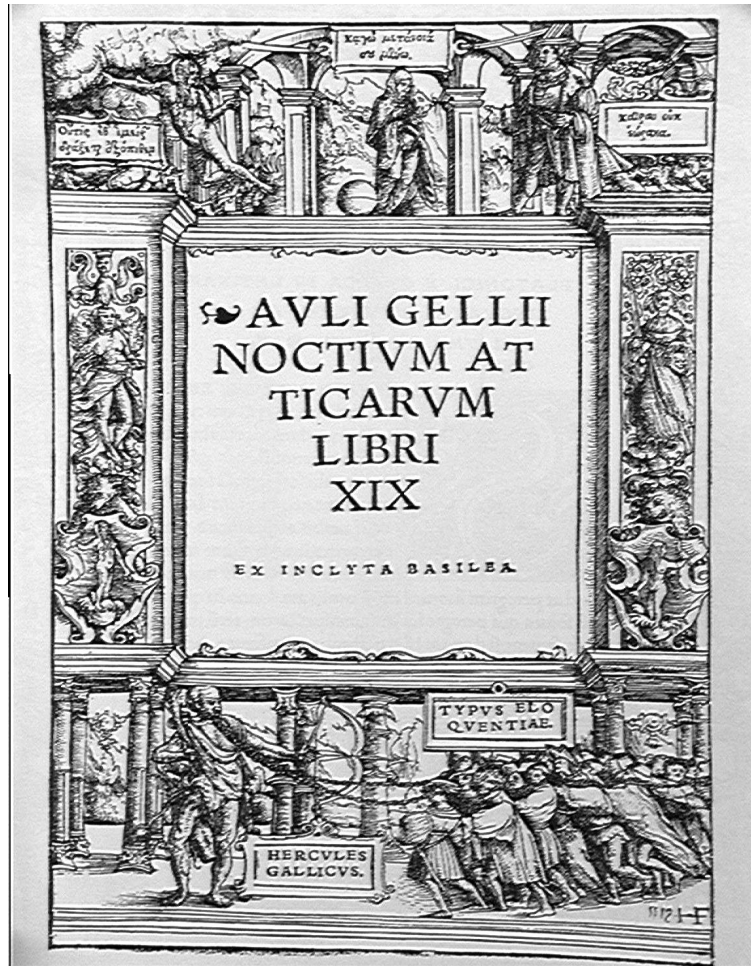


Fig. 3.7. Title Page of Aulus Gellius' *Noctium Atticarum libri XIX*, Engraved by Ambrosius Holbein, Basel, 1519.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Alfred W. Pollard, ed., *Early Illustrated Books: A History of the Decoration and Illustration of Books in the 15th and 16th Centuries*, 2nd ed. (New York: Haskell House, 1968) 80.

<sup>30</sup> Aulus Gellius, *Auli Gellii noctium Atticarum libri Perquam diligentissime castigati ac nuperrime Impressi* (Basiliæ: Apud A. Cartandrum, 1519) title page. By the courtesy of the British Library. See also Wolfgang G. Müller, "Directions for English: Thomas Wilson's *Art of Rhetoric*, George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*, and the Search for Vernacular Eloquence," *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485-1603*, eds. Michael Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 313-15.



Fig. 3.8. Enlarged Part of Fig. 3.7.

In the picture, we also see the tongue of Hercules tied to ears of the people. This representation is the same as that of the Gallic Hercules or Ogmios who appears in Lucian's tale translated by Erasmus: "as the Gauls ascribed to their Ogmios, leading about whither he wished all men by little chains fastened to their ears from his tongue."<sup>31</sup>

When French kings adopted the representation of the Gallic Hercules on the occasion of their royal entries, it served to emphasise the non-dictatorial nature of their governments and to convey the extent to which these represented their respect for the will of the people. Such images were, clearly, works of plain propaganda addressed to the French people, who could understand the message easily. That message was probably based upon Lucian's report as follows: "we consider that the real Heracles was a wise man who achieved everything by eloquence and applied persuasion as his principal force."<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, even if the chains were loose enough to allow escape, the fact remains that the kings ruled the people by *chains*. The countless people enchained by their ears in Alciato's emblem

<sup>31</sup> Erasmus, *The Paraclesis* 93.

<sup>32</sup> Lucian, "Heracles" 6.

in Paris, 1534 may have symbolised the variety of public opinions, and stressed the difficulty of controlling the many-headed multitude: the Gallic Hercules “enchained the human crowd, that most formidable of monsters, by the words of his tongue.”<sup>33</sup>

Although Erasmus’s translation of Lucian was essential to spreading the image of the oratorical Gallic Hercules all over Europe, there seems to have been another root of its popularity, namely Albrecht Dürer’s watercolour picture (Fig. 3.9).<sup>34</sup>



Fig. 3.9. *Mercury in an Allegory on Eloquence*, Drawn by Albrecht Dürer, 1514.<sup>35</sup>

Dürer’s watercolour demonstrates the confused way in which the image was apprehended and understood much more clearly than does Erasmus’ translation of Lucian. This makes investigation of this watercolour valuable to our discussion here. Walter L. Strauss titles the picture “Mercury in an Allegory on Eloquence,” but this is not quite appropriate, for this representation is a hybrid between Hercules and Mercury.<sup>36</sup> The hybrid god’s tongue connecting with the ears of the followers reminds us the Alciato’s woodcuts of the Gallic

<sup>33</sup> Wind 215.

<sup>34</sup> Moriz Thausing, *Albert Dürer: His Life and Works*, trans. Frederick Alexis Eaton, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1882) 287-89; Hallowell 249.

<sup>35</sup> Albrecht Dürer, *The Complete Drawings of Albrecht Dürer*, ed. Walter L. Strauss, 6 vols. (New York: Abaris Books, 1974) 1460-61.

<sup>36</sup> Strauss 1460; Wind 206-18; Till 254-64.

Hercules called Ogmius, but the appearance is entirely different from that of the traditional Hercules with a club and lion's skin, since, instead of the club, the hybrid god has a caduceus which is a symbol of Mercury. Moreover it is strange that the god has a hat like a cockscomb: this representation is not as simple as a Herculean or Mercurial one.

The hat merits further investigation as there may be two reasons why the hybrid god is wearing it. First, "the Latin word for cock is *gallus*, and while the picture of a cock is not known as a common emblem of Hercules, the name of *Gallicus* was given to a particular representation of the hero."<sup>37</sup> Second, in addition to the similarity of the two names, a cock is characteristically talkative—a quality clearly related to oratory. Thus, the cock in Lucian's tale "The Dream, or the Cock" says: "I am the friend of Hermes, the most talkative and eloquent of all the gods, and besides I am the close comrade and messmate of men, so it was to be expected that I would learn the human language without difficulty."<sup>38</sup>

The hybrid god above was painted by Dürer in 1514, and Erasmus' translation of Lucian's "Heracles" was published in 1506. We do not know whether Dürer knew the story of Lucian's Gallic Hercules or not, but he did, at least, know Lucian. He probably did not know the story because it seems likely that if Dürer had known the fable, he would have depicted the hybrid god as much more Herculean.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, Dürer's watercolour picture is completely different in appearance from the traditional representation of Hercules. Of course, Dürer knew Hercules, and indeed drew "Hercules Killing Hydra" in 1511 as follows (Fig. 3.10):

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<sup>37</sup> Wind 207.

<sup>38</sup> Lucian, "The Dream, or the Cock," trans. A. M. Harmon, *Lucian*, vol. 2, 7 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1915) 2.

<sup>39</sup> David Hotchkiss Price, *Albrecht Dürer's Renaissance: Humanism, Reformation, and the Art of Faith*, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Civilization (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003) 95-96.





Fig. 3.10. “Hercules Killing Hydra,” Drawn by Albrecht Dürer, 1511.<sup>40</sup>

As Wind suggests, to Dürer, Hercules may have “remained a hero of deeds, a slayer of beasts and monsters, and therefore quite distinct from Mercury who was a god of words.”<sup>41</sup> While Wind does not mention the picture of “Hercules Killing Hydra,” this violent image of Hercules is “quite distinct from” the oratorical Mercury which Dürer portrayed elsewhere.

The influence of Dürer’s image can be seen in the title page woodcut of Petrus Apianus and Bartholomaeus Amantius’ *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (*Ancient Holy Inscriptions*) published in Ingolstadt, Germany, 1534 (Fig. 3.11), which was “the first printed world-corpus of classical inscriptions.”<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Dürer 1293.

<sup>41</sup> Wind 211; Plett 516-17. See also, Till 254-64.

<sup>42</sup> Erna Mandowsky and Charles Mitchell, eds., *Pirro Ligorio’s Roman Antiquities: The Drawings in MS XIII. B. 7 in the National Library of Naples*, by Pirro Ligorio, Studies of the Warburg Institute 28 (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1963) 10; Till 256.

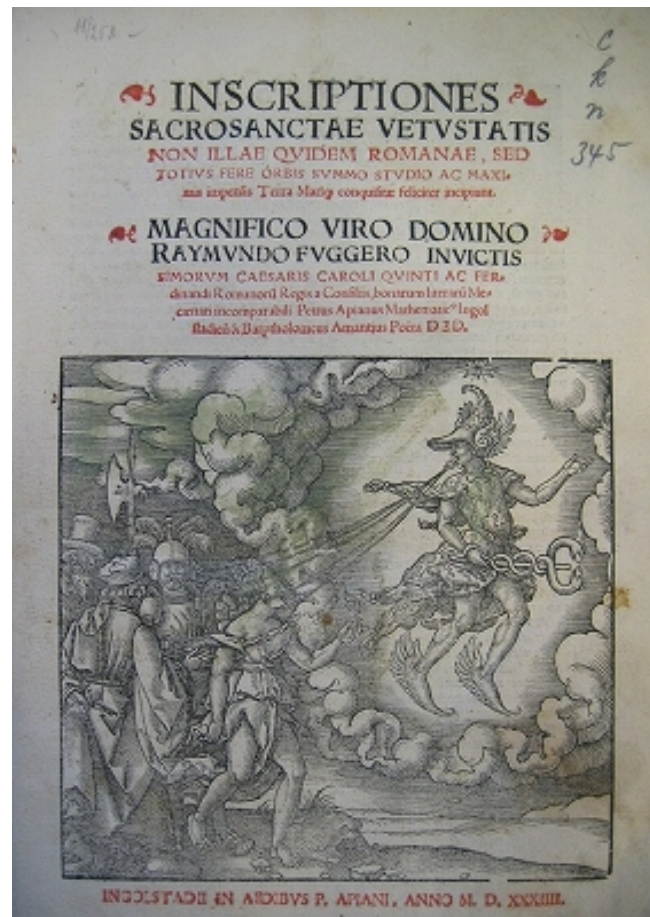


Fig. 3.11. Title Page of Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis*, 1534.<sup>43</sup>

The copy of the Dürer's Gallic Hercules on the title page was printed twenty years after the publication of the original watercolour picture, and the gap of time seems to indicate that the hybrid representation of Hercules and Mercury had become widespread in Europe, even if the copy was published in Germany, Dürer's homeland.

The discussion so far makes it possible to point out that the Gallic Hercules on the top of the arch for Henri II's 1549 Entry into Paris was the hybrid god of Hercules and Mercury. This image of the god reflects the Humanistic and visual tradition of Erasmus and Dürer, since the Gallic Hercules of Henri II has a stick like a Mercurial caduceus with a

<sup>43</sup> Petrus Apianus and Bartholomaeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis non illae quidem romanae, sed totivs fere orbis summo studio ac maximis impensis Terra Mariq; conquisitae feliciter incipiunt* (Ingolstadii in aedibvs: P. Apiani, 1534) title page. By the courtesy of the Warburg Library.

snake wrapped around it (Fig. 3.12):



Fig. 3.12. Enlarged Part of Fig. 3.1.

If Henri's stick with the two snakes around it (Fig. 3.12) had been intended as a Mercurial caduceus, the stick would probably have signified Henri's Mercurial characteristic of eloquence. As we saw in Chapter 2, the French kings used Herculean representations to emphasise their rule over the Hydra-headed multitude, but Henri's representation shows another side of governance of the multitude with many tongues: Mercurial or Herculean rule over the fickle multitude by eloquence.

We have investigated the tongue and mouth metaphors in the European context, but *Coriolanus* was written in England. Hence, we need to further explore the place of the hybrid god, and we have to find English examples of it in order to clarify the implications of Hercules and Hydra for *Coriolanus*.

Not only on the Continent but also in England, the representation of the hybrid god was in wide circulation, and many intellectuals mention it in their works. The most notable instance is found in Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1605). Here, Mosca, Volpone's

servant, wishes the lawyer Voltore the power of eloquence, implying the connection between Mercury and Hercules:

MOSCA. [To CORVINO] But you shall eat it. [To himself] Much! [To VOLTORE again, so all can hear] Worshipful sir,  
Mercury sit upon your thund'ring tongue,  
Or the French Hercules, and make your language  
As conquering as his club, to beat along,  
(As with a tempest) flat, our adversaries!  
[To him aside] But much more yours, sir. (4.3.20-25)<sup>44</sup>

As Jonson's classical knowledge shows, Hercules in England inherited the characteristics of the eloquent Hercules from European Humanism.<sup>45</sup> For example, George Puttenham, in a highly influential book of rhetoric, *The Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, presents the Lucian-Celtic image of the eloquent Hercules<sup>46</sup>:

*Lucianus* alleageth he saw in the pourtrait of *Hercules* within the Citie of Marseills in Provence: where they had figured a lustie old man with a long chayne tyed by one end at his tong, by the other end at the peoples eares, who stood a farre of and seemed to be drawen to him by the force of that chayne fastned to his tong, as who would say, by force of his perswasions.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, Thomas Wilson, Humanist and diplomat, in *The Art of Rhetoric*, 1560, recommended using not “inkhorn terms”—Wilson was probably criticising the pedantic terms of Scholasticism as the Italian Humanists did—but plain ones, and stressed the importance of eloquence to the establishment and advancement of civilization.<sup>48</sup> As the

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<sup>44</sup> Ben Jonson, *Volpone, or The Fox*, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, eds. David M. Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson, vol. 3, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> Heinrich F. Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004) 514.

<sup>46</sup> This book “was printed only once in 1589,” but “so many theories of Elizabethan culture have been erected” upon the book. See, Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice*, Ideas in Context 63 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 76.

<sup>47</sup> George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, eds. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936) 142.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric (1560)*, ed. Peter E. Medine (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994) 188. This book was widely read in Tudor England, and printed “eight times between 1553 and 1585.” See, Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric* 76. For the two significant works on rhetoric in Elizabethan England, see also Müller, 307-22.

section title “Eloquence First Given by God, and After Lost by Man, and Last Repaired by God” indicates fallen humankind had lost “the pleasantness of reason and the sweetness of utterance,” but “through nurture and good advisement” we regain them.<sup>49</sup> Wilson says that the power which can make humankind change from “beasts” to “men” is eloquence, and refers to Hercules as a symbol of eloquence:

Such force hath the tongue, and such is the power of eloquence and reason, that most men are forced even to yield in that which most standeth against their will. And therefore the poets do feign that Hercules, being a man of great wisdom, had all men linked together by the ears in a chain to draw them and lead them even as he lusted. For his wit was so great, his tongue so eloquent, and his experience such, that no one man was able to withstand his reason, but everyone was rather driven to do that which he would, and to will that which he did, agreeing to his advice both in word and work in all that ever they were able.<sup>50</sup>

This Lucian-Celtic representation of the eloquent Hercules, or Ogmios, is supplemented by another citation by Wilson. In the Dedication to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, Wilson appreciates the political ability of Pyrrhus who knew the significance of eloquence:

When Pyrrhus, king of the Epirotes, made battle against the Romans, and could neither by force of arms nor yet by any policy win certain strongholds, he used commonly to send one Cincas (a noble orator and sometimes scholar to Demosthenes) to persuade with the captains and people that were in them that they should yield up the said hold or towns without fight or resistance. And so it came to pass that through the pithy eloquence of this noble orator divers strong castles and fortresses were peaceably given up into the hands of Pyrrhus, which he should have found very hard and tedious to win by the sword.<sup>51</sup>

Wilson does not say that the king was “a noble orator,” but the king knew the impossibility of conquering the Romans without Cincas as a noble orator: Pyrrhus is here indirectly equivalent to an eloquent king.

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<sup>49</sup> Wilson 42.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson 42.

<sup>51</sup> Wilson 35.

The citations from George Puttenham and Thomas Wilson seem to have nothing to do with politics and religion, but the fact that the Lucian Hercules was used in the Martin Marprelate controversy by pamphleteers like Gabriel Harvey indicates that the representation was deep-rooted in politics and religion, just as the Gallic Hercules was a vehicle of policy for the French monarchs. The Martin Marprelate controversy was basically a controversy between Puritan or Presbyterian pamphleteers and Episcopal disputants. The Puritan pamphleteers such as John Penry, John Udall, and Job Throckmorton, using the Martin Marprelate's pseudonym, denounced the Episcopal system of Church government promoted by John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, who unofficially commissioned pro-Anglican controversialists such as John Lyly, Thomas Nashe, and Robert Greene, to refute the Puritans.<sup>52</sup> John Lyly wielded a facile pen in his pamphlets against the Puritan pamphleteers, but, when he hinted that Gabriel Harvey was a sympathiser with Martin Marprelate in his *Pappe with an Hatchet*, the controversy entered a new phase. Lyly implies that "he" is Harvey: "he is a mad lad, and such a one as cares as little for writing without wit, as *Martin* doth for writing without honestie; a notable coach companion for *Martin*, to drawe Divinitie from the Colledges of *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, to Shoomakers hall in Sainct *Martins*."<sup>53</sup> This baseless implication eventually involved Harvey in a print war, especially in the Nashe-Greene-Harvey quarrel. The verbal combat was so fierce that an author, who was probably John Day, said that Nashe "carried the deadly stockado in his pen, whose muse was armed with a gagtooth, and his pen possest

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<sup>52</sup> The Martin Marprelate controversy is summarised by Ronald B. McKerrow and F. P. Wilson, eds., Introduction, *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, rep. ed., vol. 5, 5 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958) 34-109. On the controversy, see also Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture 17 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 84-87, 217-18; Georgia E. Brown, *Redefining Elizabethan Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 75-78.

<sup>53</sup> John Lyly, *Pappe with an Hatchet*, *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. R. Warwick Bond, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902) 400.

with Hercules furies” in his play, *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus*.<sup>54</sup>

“Hercules furies” probably alludes to the representation of Hercules in Seneca’s *Hercules Furens*, but if the word Hercules had had no associations with eloquence, John Day would not have cited the name of Hercules in this context.<sup>55</sup>

The associations of Hercules with eloquence can be found in other Martin Marprelate controversies Nashe, Greene, and Harvey evoked. Harvey clearly expresses the purpose of his pamphlet in *Four Letters, and Certain Sonnets* which are collected letters of challenge to Robert Greene: “I sende you my opinion, in a plaine, but true Sonnet, upon the famous new worke, intituled, *A Quippe for an upstart Courtier*; or forsooth, *A quaint Dispute betweene Velvet-breeches, and Cloth-breeches*.”<sup>56</sup> In the third of the *Four Letters*, Harvey numbers Greene among “Pigmeis, triumphantly marched to invade *Hercules a sleepe*.”<sup>57</sup> We can find this story of Hercules and Pigmies also in Alciato’s emblem books (Fig. 3.13):

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<sup>54</sup> J. B. Leishman, ed., *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598-1601)* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1949) 245. *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus* was probably written by John Day, but the authorship is still debatable. See Leishman, ed. Introduction, 26-34.

<sup>55</sup> Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Lucii Annei Senecae tragedia prima quae inscribitur Hercules furens: The first tragedie of Lucius Anneus Seneca, intituled Hercules furens*, trans. Jasper Heywood, STC (2nd ed.): 22223 (London: Henry Sutton, 1561).

<sup>56</sup> Gabriel Harvey, *Four Letters, and Certain Sonnets, The Works of Gabriel Harvey*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, vol. 1, 3 vols. (London: Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Limited, 1884) 160.

<sup>57</sup> Harvey 1.193.



Fig. 3.13. Hercules and Pygmies, Paris, 1542.<sup>58</sup>

The motto of the emblem known as Emblem 58 is “Wider ihene dis sich etwas understeen uber yr vermugen (Against those who undertake something beyond their power); and its epigram is as follows:

When Hercules lay down and was resting a great hoard of pygmies came to him insolently thinking to kill him. The hero awakens and stuffs them all into his lion skin; he had no difficulty in subduing them. He who overreaches himself earns scorn.<sup>59</sup>

Harvey’s description of Greene as a small Pygmy implies that it is easy for Harvey to refute Greene by the Herculean power of eloquence as easy as twisting a baby’s arm.

Harvey’s comparison with the eloquent Hercules is not just a figure of speech, because Harvey knew the Lucian-Ogmius Hercules and often referred to the representation in his works. For example, we can locate a reference to Hercules in *Gabrielis Harueii Rhetor, vel duorum dierum oratio, de natura, arte, & exercitatione rhetorica* (*Gabriel Harvey’s Rhetor, or a Two-Day Speech on Nature, Art, & Practice in the Study of Rhetoric*), published in 1577, which was delivered in Latin as one of his spring-term opening orations

<sup>58</sup> Daly and Cuttler, *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation*, Emblem 58; Green 24.

<sup>59</sup> Daly and Cuttler, *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation*, Emblem 58, Paris in 1542.



for 1574 when he was appointed Praelector in Rhetoric at Cambridge.<sup>60</sup> In the oration, Harvey talks to the audience about the Lucian-Ogmios Hercules:

I ask, have you not heard that once that famous Gallic Hercules, whom the Celts called Ogmios, used to lead around huge multitudes of men and an assembly, not with iron chains, but with certain small gold and amber chains. They had been bound by the language, drawn by the ears to him wherever he desired them to be drawn. It is an allegory, Cantabrigians, and it consists of the effect of eloquent language which attracts the ears of all to itself, as if entangling them in certain precise and very enjoyable chains, to such an extent that they are easily restrained by these and would not even wish to flee even if they were able, but rather would follow the attraction voluntarily.<sup>61</sup>

This representation of the Lucian Hercules has an interesting interpretation, for Harvey says in *Four Letters* that Greene's "diffamation" is "intollerable," and the Green's slanderous article is "venome. . . the Dragons Head spitteth."<sup>62</sup> If we recall the poisonous Hydra, this allusion is clear: it is a declaration that the eloquent Harvey as Hercules is attacking the venomous Greene, the Hydra; and in fact Harvey calls Greene "a greene Dragon."<sup>63</sup>

Thomas Nashe could not remain indifferent to this attack, and he indignantly replied to Harvey's letter to Greene in *Strange Newes, of the Intercepting Certain Letters*, 1592. Nashe denounces the Herculean Harvey: "O heavenly Muse, I thanke thee, for thou hast giv'n mee the patience to travel through the tedious wilderness of this Gomorian Epistle. Not *Hercules*, when he cleansed the stables of *Aegeas*, under-tooke such a stinking unsavorie exploit."<sup>64</sup> This citation might need explanation: Nashe depicts Harvey's verbose *Four Letters* as "the tedious wilderness of this Gomorian Epistle," and he thinks

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<sup>60</sup> Robert M. Chandler, "Rhetor: The First Lecture by Gabriel Harvey," *Allegorica* 4 (1979) 146; Jenny C. Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Shakespeare's England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012) 75.

<sup>61</sup> Robert M. Chandler, *Gabriel Harvey's Rhetor: A Translation and Critical Edition*, Diss. University of Missouri-Columbia, 1978 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1978) 136-38. Chandler's translation in *Allegorica* above contains only the translation of the First Lecture, but his dissertation has the whole translation.

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, *Four Letters* 1.156.

<sup>63</sup> Harvey, *Four Letters* 1.223.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Nashe, *Strange Newes, of the Intercepting Certain Letters, The Works of Thomas Nashe*, eds. Ronald B. McKerrow and F. P. Wilson, rep. ed., vol. 1, 5 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958) 326.

that Harvey is not Herculean at all because Hercules cleansed the stables of King Augeias, but Harvey's Herculean labour is only "a stinking unsavorie exploit."<sup>65</sup>

Even if Nashe criticised Harvey's pseudo-Herculean labour, Harvey himself regarded his labour as Herculean or Mercurial. The proof is found in the title page of his *Rhetor* (Fig. 3.14):

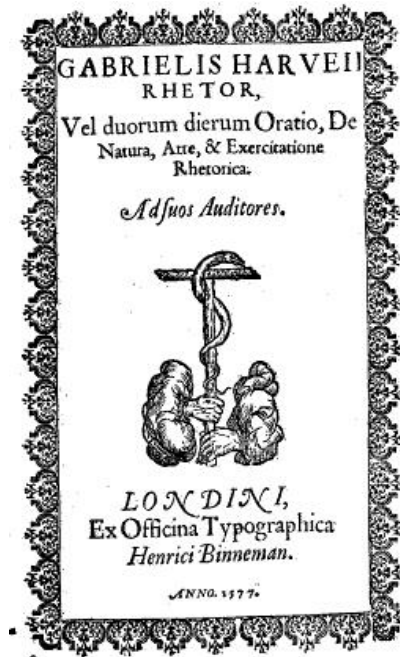


Fig. 3.14. Title Page of Gabriel Harvey's *Rhetor*, 1577.<sup>66</sup>

Robert M. Chandler dismisses this as merely as an "ornamental woodcut" in his edition of *Rhetor*, but this is superficial.<sup>67</sup> The woodcut cannot be merely a printer's mark of Henrici Binneman, because Binneman's books use a different design on title pages.<sup>68</sup> What, then,

<sup>65</sup> Hercules' fifth Labour was to cleanse King Augeas's (or Augeias's) filthy cattle yard, which had not been cleared away for over a great period, in one day. Hercules succeeded in cleansing the stables by diverting the two neighbouring rivers, and making the streams rush through the yard. See Ovid, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) 9.229; Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. James George Frazer, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1961) 2.5.5; Siculus Diodorus, *Diodorus of Sicily*, trans. C. H. Oldfather, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 2, 12 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) 4.13.3; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod, The Loeb Classical Library, 5 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1918-35) 5.1.9-10.

<sup>66</sup> Harvey, *Gabrielis Harveii Rhetor* title page.

<sup>67</sup> Chandler, *Gabriel Harvey's Rhetor: A Translation and Critical Edition* xcvi.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, Everard Digby, *De duplici methodo libri duo vnicam P. Rami methodum refutantes*,

does the woodcut represent? The answer once again leads us to Renaissance Humanism.

As we have seen above, Harvey's *Rhetor* was originally a lecture which was delivered in Latin as his opening spring-term oration for 1574 when he was appointed Praelector in Rhetoric at Cambridge, but *Rhetor* was one of his two-day lecture series, and the other lecture was on Ciceronian rhetoric.<sup>69</sup> Both lectures were printed by Henrici Binneman in 1577, and, interestingly, each title page carries the same woodcut.<sup>70</sup> Why did the publisher or Harvey himself choose this woodcut for the title pages? It is probably because both the lectures were on rhetoric and eloquence which the Renaissance Humanists such as Petrarch, Valla, and Erasmus valued highly: there is a possibility that the design of the woodcut symbolised rhetoric and eloquence.

The serpent and the tree of the woodcut probably signify the serpent and the tree in Eden. Both the serpent and the tree were traditionally symbols of wisdom. As Genesis 3.1 says, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made"; especially, the serpent was the initiator of both evil and wisdom for human beings; the serpent was worshiped by ancient European peoples as a symbol of divine wisdom.<sup>71</sup> This symbolism, though, cannot explain fully the connection between the

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STC (2nd ed.): 6841 (London: Henrici Binneman, 1580) title page; Johann Theodor Clain and E. S., *De rebus gestis Britanniae commentarioli tres Ad ornatissimum virum M. Henricum Broncarem Armigerum*, STC (2nd ed.): 21488 (London: Henrici Binneman, 1582) title page. The author, "E. S.," of the second book is usually attributed to Edmund Spenser.

<sup>69</sup> See Gabriel Harvey, *Gabriel Harvey's Ciceronianus*, trans. Clarence A. Forbes, ed. Harold S. Wilson, Studies in the Humanities 4 (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Printing Department, 1945); Michael Pincombe, *Elizabethan Humanism: Literature and Learning in the Later Sixteenth Century*, Longman Medieval and Renaissance Library (Harlow: Longman, 2001) 84-103.

<sup>70</sup> Gabriel Harvey, *Gabrielis Harueii Ciceronianus, vel Oratio post reditum habita Cantabrigiae ad suos auditores*, STC (2nd ed.): 12899 (London: Henrici Binneman, 1577) title page.

<sup>71</sup> John F. A. Sawyer, "The Image of God, the Wisdom of Serpents and the Knowledge of Good and Evil," *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical, and Literary Images of Eden*, eds. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 136 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992) 64-73; William N. Wilder, "Illumination and Investiture: The Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3," *Westminster Theological Journal* 68 (2006) 51-69. On the occidental image of tree and serpent, see also James Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship: Or, Illustrations of Mythology and Art in India in the First and Fourth Centuries after Christ, from the Sculptures of the Buddhist Topes at Sanchi and Amravati*, rep. ed. (Delhi: Oriental Publisher, 1971) 3-39.

woodcut and rhetoric even if divine wisdom is associated with the power of words. In order to clarify the connection, we need to discuss how Renaissance intellectuals joined the serpent with rhetoric.

A clue is given by a woodcut designed by Holbein the Younger (Fig. 3.15):

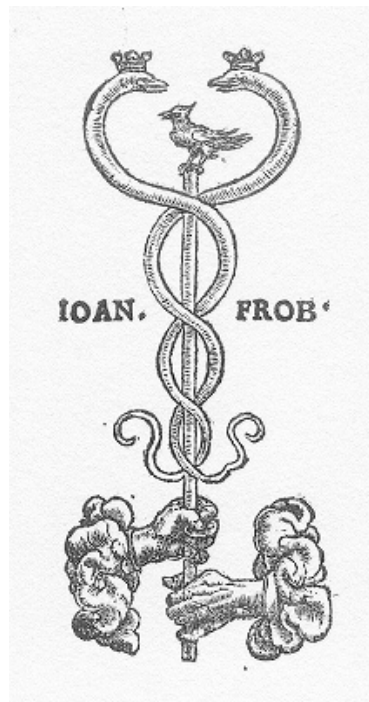


Fig. 3.15. Printer's Mark of Johannes Froben, Engraved by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1523.<sup>72</sup>

This woodcut is a printer's mark of Johannes Froben who published many books of Renaissance Humanists.<sup>73</sup> Another instance is shown below (Figs. 3.16 and 3.17):

<sup>72</sup> Christian Müller, ed., *Hans Holbein d.J.: Die Druckgraphik im Kupferstichkabinett Basel* (Basel: Verlag Schwabe, 1997) 194, fig. 124a.

<sup>73</sup> Eileen Bloch, "Erasmus and the Froben Press: The Making of an Editor," *The Library Quarterly* 35.2 (1965) 109-20; Earle Hilgert, "Johann Froben and the Basel University Scholars, 1513-1523," *The Library Quarterly* 41.2 (1971) 141-69.

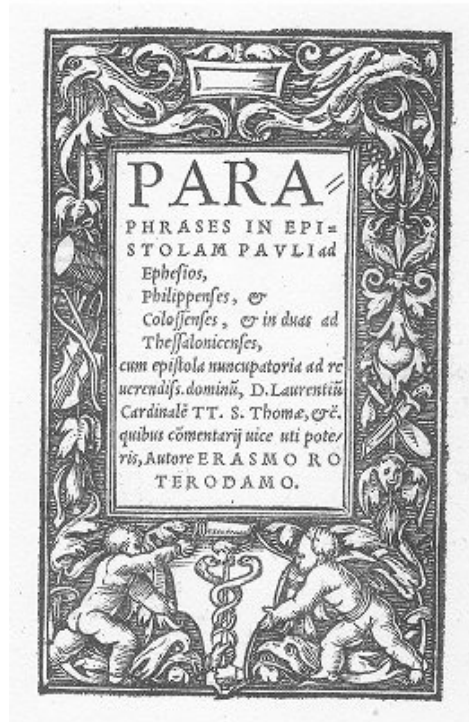


Fig. 3.16. Title Page of Erasmus' *Paraphrases in Epistolam Pauli ad Ephesios, Philippenses, & Colossenses....*, Engraved by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1520.<sup>74</sup>



Fig. 3.17. Enlarged Part of Fig. 3.16.

Holbein's woodcuts here remind us of a Mercurial caduceus like the one of Dürer's

<sup>74</sup> Müller, *Hans Holbein d.J* 37, fig. 17.

*Mercury in an Allegory on Eloquence* (Fig. 3.9). This printer's mark has especially interested medical historians because the Mercurial caduceus has been confusedly regarded as a symbol of medical science, and, in fact, for instance, the United States Army Medical Department still uses a design of two serpents with a winged sword (Fig. 3.18).<sup>75</sup>



Fig. 3.18. Official Insignia of the United States Army Medical Department, 1902.<sup>76</sup>

Elizabeth B. Anderson says: “Johann Froben, a Swiss printer of medical books, used a design similar to the caduceus except for two doves instead of the outspread wings.”<sup>77</sup> However, this description should be emended because the publications of Froben was not limited to medical books.<sup>78</sup> This misunderstanding probably arises from the preconception that Mercury is a god of medicine, disregarding his role as a god of eloquence which the Humanists emphasised. Harvey talked about Mercury “who, it is certain, was a man very skilled in the art of persuasion, is said either to have been called the

<sup>75</sup> Walter J. Friedlander, *The Golden Wand of Medicine: A History of the Caduceus Symbol in Medicine*, Contributions in Medical Studies 35 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992) 127-44; André Ménéz, *The Subtle Beast: Snakes, from Myth to Medicine*, Science Spectra 4 (London: Taylor & Francis, 2003) 13-16.

<sup>76</sup> Stephen Lock, John M. Last, George Dunea, John Sir Walton, Paul B. Beeson and Jeremiah A. Barondess, *The Oxford Illustrated Companion to Medicine*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 262. See also *Center for Health Care Contracting, United States Army Medical Command*, 2010, 24 Aug., 2010, <<http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/>>.

<sup>77</sup> Elizabeth B. Anderson, “Medical Records, History of,” *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, eds. Allen Kent, Harold Lancour and Jay E. Daily, vol. 17 (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1976) 428.

<sup>78</sup> Charles William Heckethorn, *The Printers of Basle in the XV. & XVI. Centuries: Their Biographies, Printed Books and Devices* (London: Unwin Brothers, 1897) 91-111. According to Heckethorn, in 256 books of Froben's imprints, only one book is related medicine. See also Friedlander 110.

God of Eloquence, or to have been appointed the agent and messenger of the Gods.”<sup>79</sup>

Interestingly enough, Erasmus mentions the printer’s mark of Froben:

If only the princes on our side of the Alps encouraged liberal studies in the open-handed way one finds in Italy, the Froben serpents would not be much worse off than the Aldine dolphin. Aldus, making haste slowly, has acquired as much gold as he has reputation, and richly deserves both. Froben holds his staff always upright with no purpose in view except the public good, he never swerves from the innocence of his doves, and expresses the wisdom of serpents more in his badge than his behaviour; and so he is richer in reputation than in coin.<sup>80</sup>

The “Aldine dolphin” means the printer’s mark of the press started by Aldus Manutius in Venice. Erasmus compares the Aldine with the Froben by appreciating the honest poverty of the Froben, saying that Froben “never swerves from the innocence of his doves, and expresses the wisdom of serpents more in his badge than his behaviour.” This alludes to Matt. 10.16 in which Jesus admonishes his disciples: “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”<sup>81</sup> This reference reveals the Biblical implication of the printer’s mark of Froben (Fig. 3.15), but this was probably in any case known to Erasmus. Of course, Erasmus knew the Mercurial caduceus, and mentioned the “magic wand” in his *The Paraclesis*:

if such power of speech [Ciceronian eloquence] was ever granted anyone, as the tales of the ancient poets not entirely without cause attributed to Mercury, who as if with a magic wand and a divine lyre induces sleep when he wishes and likewise snatches sleep away, plunging whom he wished into hell and again calling them forth from hell.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Chandler, *Gabriel Harvey’s Rhetor* 142.

<sup>80</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, II i 1 to II vi 100*, trans. R. A. B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 33 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 15.

<sup>81</sup> Friedlander 113. On the biblical images of the dove and serpent, see Neil Forsyth, *The Satanic Epic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003) 301-13. His original essay is in Neil Forsyth, “At The Sign of the Dove and Serpent,” *Milton Quarterly* 34.2 (2000) 56-65. See also, Hugh William Davies, *Devices of the Early Printers 1457-1560: Their History and Development with a Chapter on Portrait Figures of Printers* (London: Grafton, 1935) 50-58, 286-88, 290-91; Harry L. Arnold, Jr., “Serpent-Emblems of Medicine,” *The Journal of the Michigan State Medical Society* 36 (1937) 164.

<sup>82</sup> Erasmus, *The Paraclesis* 93.

*The Paraclesis* was “the preface to Erasmus’ Greek and Latin edition of the New Testament, which Froben first published in February 1516,” and it was “one of the great classic statements of Erasmus’ biblical humanism.”<sup>83</sup> “Erasmus’ biblical humanism” is called “the philosophy of Christ,” and he thought it was a fusion between Christianity and paganism. Erasmus explains the harmonious characteristic of the philosophy as follows: “although no one has taught this [“the restoration of human nature”] more perfectly and more effectively than Christ, nevertheless one may find in the books of the pagans very much which does agree with His teaching.”<sup>84</sup> As Erasmus says at the beginning of *The Paraclesis*, the “eloquence” of paganism is useful for “the most holy and wholesome study of Christian philosophy.” To Erasmus pagan eloquence and Christianity were inseparably combined; therefore, he could refer to the Lucian Ogmios or the Celtic Hercules, and the Mercurial caduceus at the beginning of *The Paraclesis*. It is possible that the shape of the printer’s mark of Froben reminded Erasmus of the Mercurial wand. Moreover, a hand from clouds or “*manus Dei*” in the printer’s mark symbolises “a divine hand” and “the Almighty’s hand,” which signify “God’s omnipotent power and protection, drawn from the Bible (*Ps.* 144:7, *Isa.* 59:1, etc.).”<sup>85</sup> In short, the printer’s mark represents the fusion between Christianity and paganism through eloquence; and it should be noted that both the fusion and the emphasis on eloquence or rhetoric were central to Renaissance Humanism.<sup>86</sup> The printer’s mark displayed the self-confidence and pride of Froben and Erasmus who

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<sup>83</sup> John C. Olin, ed., Introduction, *The Paraclesis*, by Desiderius Erasmus, trans. John C. Olin, 2nd. ed., *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Selected Writings of Erasmus, with the Life of Erasmus by Beatus Rhenanus* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1975) 92.

<sup>84</sup> Erasmus, *The Paraclesis* 100.

<sup>85</sup> Leslie Hotson, *Shakespeare by Hilliard* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977) 34.

<sup>86</sup> See Douglas Brooks-Davies, *The Mercurian Monarch: Magical Politics from Spenser to Pope* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983) 4: “As an exemplar of the art of eloquence, Mercury is traditionally linked in humanist mythology with those symbolic founders of civilization, Amphion, Arion, and Orpheus”. See also Hotson 41.



published Humanistic books, declaring them to be Herculean or Mercurial, like the European monarchs.

Here, at the end of this chapter, let us summarise our discussion. The chapter had two aims. The first aim was to show why Hercules was chosen for the monarchical representations in the European Renaissance. The second was to clarify why Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* is obsessed by images of tongue and mouth. To find the connection between the two topics was the purpose of this chapter.

There is no doubt that eloquence was essential for rulers to govern their countries. It is evident that eloquence was key to the ability of rulers to govern and that was an important motivation in Henri II's skilful choice of the representation of the Gallic Hercules in the Royal Entry into Paris as part of his propaganda for the masses. While Herculean rulers used swords and shields, Herculean eloquence was another powerful weapon to attack political and religious enemies, or to tame the fickle many-headed multitude. The image of the eloquent Hercules was created and modified by Humanists such as Petrarch, Valla, and Erasmus who emphasised the significance of eloquence and rhetoric as the antithesis of pedantic Scholasticism. Ogmius, or the Celtic Hercules, in Lucian's tale translated by Erasmus, was a symbol of eloquence, and Ogmius was probably one of the reasons why Hercules and Mercury were mixed up. That confusion appears in Henri's II Entry into Paris, where the Herculean figure has a stick wrapped with a serpent like the Mercurial caduceus, and leads the people by chains from his tongue fastened to their ears. This representation with the caduceus also appeared in Dürer's watercolours, illustrating the twining of Hercules and Mercury. In England, the hybrid god appears in the texts of English intellectuals such as George Puttenham and Thomas Wilson widely read. The

reason why the dramatist and pamphleteers such as Ben Jonson, Gabriel Harvey, John Lyly, Thomas Nashe, and Robert Greene under the influence of Renaissance Humanism, mentioned the oratorical Hercules in the Martin Marprelate controversy is that the representation was deep-rooted also in English politics and religion.

In this dissertation, we are trying to discover Humanistic traces of the Hercules-Hydra representations. The Mercurial caduceus which was associated with Herculean eloquence was, it turns out, quite Humanistic because it represented the self-confidence or pride of the Humanists who stressed the power of rhetoric; therefore, Erasmus compared himself to Hercules in his portraits by Holbein the Younger, Froben used the printer's mark of the Mercurial caduceus, and the title pages of Harvey's books on rhetoric had the symbol.

Coriolanus compares himself to Hercules just as Erasmus did, but Coriolanus is not eloquent. It is no exaggeration to say that *Coriolanus* is a play on the topic of the significance of eloquence, since the play is full of the tongue and mouth imagery. In contrast to the tongues of the Hydra-headed multitude and the tribunes, Herculean Coriolanus did not have such a flexible tongue. If Coriolanus regarded himself as Hercules, he should have been eloquent and led the Hydra-headed multitude by chains from his tongue fastened to their ears just as Henri II did. However, he completely ignored the power of eloquence and the existence of the chains: this causes his tragedy.

## Chapter 4

### The Virtuous Hercules

We have been investigating what representations of Hercules could do, and did, for the image of European monarchs. In Chapter 3, we asked, “why did the European monarchs like comparing themselves to Hercules?”; and we focused on the first answer: the European monarchs who realised the importance of oratory in politics chose Hercules who symbolised eloquence. In Chapter 4, we will discover another reason, focusing now on the virtuous Hercules. What was the significance of the representation of Hercules as virtuous, and how does this representation fit into, and change, the pattern of representation we have been discussing so far?

Hercules’ two attributes of eloquence and virtue usually appear separately, and they rarely coexist in a single Herculean image, since they have two distinct sources from different ages. On the one hand, as discovered in Chapter 3, the source of the eloquent Hercules was Erasmus’ Latin translation of Lucian’s Greek “Heracles” in 1506. On the other hand, the story of the virtuous Hercules, as we shall see later, was more available than that of the eloquent Hercules because Xenophon had made it known in Greek, and Cicero in Latin, whereas few people could have known Lucian’s tale until the Latin translation by Erasmus appeared. An additional aim of this chapter is to see what Cominius really intends when he praises Coriolanus’ “valour” and “virtue” as those of a demigod (2.2.84-87). If we can prove that “virtue” was an attribute of Hercules, our hypothesis that

Coriolanus is identified with Hercules will be verified from a new point of view.

This chapter adopts the following procedure. It starts by examining the conceptual history of “virtue” as it changed from the medieval moralistic “virtue” to the Renaissance strategic “virtù,” between Petrarch and Machiavelli. Machiavelli compares the multitude to Hydra in his book, *The Prince*, where he investigates the role of the fickle multitude in politics and their mob psychology. Since the book deals with principles of governance, it can be said that the analysis of the Hydra-like multitude had the purpose of teaching Herculean princes how to cope with the many-headed monster. In the following sections, we will examine the virtuous hero, as presented originally in Xenophon and Cicero, and their fable of Hercules at the Crossroads. Renaissance writers, thinkers, politicians, and Humanists were intensely interested in the meanings of “virtue.” Therefore, tracing the footprints of the virtuous Hercules leads us to understanding patterns of thought and politics in the Renaissance. Writers were reconsidering the opposition of virtue and fortune: Can fortune be changed by virtue? Machiavelli thought that the Renaissance virtuous Hercules could tame the fickle feminine Fortune whose characteristics belonged to the Middle Ages. The Machiavellian view of virtue and fortune will clarify the connotative change between the two ages by adducing concrete instances of the virtuous Hercules and examining its applications and adaptations in European political thought. However, to comprehend this transition, we have to examine the traditional, moralistic or medieval, virtue, which Baldassare Castiglione and Erasmus upheld in citing Hercules. In the following sections, our focus on textual and iconological evidence will shift from the virtuous Hercules on the Continent to that in English politics. The Renaissance, in which the virtuous Hercules was deeply rooted, historically and geographically, travelled north from Italy, and we shall

follow that trajectory.

“Virtue” appears to be a commonplace concept, but we should not forget that the word “virtù” carried more political implications in the Renaissance, becoming a pivotal realpolitik concept in Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. The connotation of “virtue” started to change from medieval moralistic and conventional “virtue” to Renaissance strategic “virtù” in Machiavelli’s writing although we can identify signs of the conceptual change already in Petrarch in the early Renaissance.<sup>1</sup> Our examination of Hercules-Hydra representations in the European Renaissance sheds light on the politics of European monarchs in this politically and religiously turbulent period. Hercules was an embodiment of the new politics of the Renaissance, reflecting the conceptual shift from Medieval “virtue” to Renaissance “virtù.”

In order to trace the footprints of Hercules in politics, Machiavelli’s *The Prince* will provide an appropriate starting point. While Machiavelli does not refer to Herculean princes in this work, Hercules and Hydra are two sides of the same coin; so his discussion of the Hydra-like multitude implies a reference to Hercules. *The Prince* explores effective methods of governing; through the analysis of the Hydra representation, Machiavelli taught Herculean princes how to tame the many-headed multitude.

Machiavelli, interestingly and surprisingly enough, compares the multitude to the Hydra which is killed by Hercules. In his *Discourses on Livy*, Book 2, Chapter 24, he

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<sup>1</sup> For studies of the word “virtù,” see Harvey C. Mansfield, *Machiavelli’s Virtue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) 315-16. Isaiah Berlin, “The Originality of Machiavelli,” *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* (London: Hogarth Press, 1979) 48, 52: The moralistic and conventional virtue is based upon “pity, humility, self-sacrifice, obedience,” “chastity, affability, mercy, humanity, liberality.” On Machiavelli’s relationship to Renaissance Humanism, see Neal Wood, “Machiavelli’s Humanism of Action,” *The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli’s Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Parel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 59. Machiavelli is a humanist on three points: “relying on classical Greek and Latin sources”; separating “politics from religion and theology; and urging “men consciously to direct their lives.” See also, William J. Connell, “The Republican Idea,” *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins, *Ideas in Context* 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 17.

poses the question whether rulers should build military fortresses to protect their countries, and gives two reasons for not doing so: “Fortresses are build eyther for resistance against the enemy, or for defence against any tumult of the subjects”; he concludes that in the first case fortresses “are unnecessary, in the second hurtfull.”<sup>2</sup> Machiavelli explains why a ruler’s building fortresses to defend himself from his subjects is ill-advised: it means that the ruler does not trust his subjects and regards them as traitors; and his distrust arouses their hatred for him: “the causes of hatred, for the most part are derivd from thence, that that Prince or Republique hath Cittadels upon them” (384, bk. 2, ch. 24). A ruler might think that it is possible to control the people by force, but this is impossible because “all these forces and violences which are in use to bridle a people withall, are of no value” (384). Even if “thou [the ruler] doest disperse, extinguish, disorder, and disunite them so, that in no case they can make such a body, as can hurt thee,” and if “thou destroyest their heads, and proceedest still to injury the rest, there will grow up again new heads, as fast as those of *Hydra*” (384). Machiavelli concludes: “If thou buildest Cittadels, they are quite unprofitable in time of peace; because they encourage thee to wrong them, but in time of warre they are of least use, for then are they assaulted by the enemy, and thy subjects too;

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<sup>2</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *Machiavels discourses. upon the first decade of T. Livius translated out of the Italian; vvith some marginall animadversions noting and taxing his errours*. By E.D, trans. Edward Dacres, STC (2nd ed.): 17160 (London: Thomas Paine, 1636) 383. Machiavelli’s *Discourses on Livy* and *The Prince* were not printed in English translations until 1636 and 1640 respectively, surviving in manuscript form, but printed Italian editions of both were also in circulation from the 1580s. See Felix Raab, *The English Face of Machiavelli: A Changing Interpretation, 1500-1700*, Studies in Political History (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964) 53: “everything indicates that, at least from the middle ’eighties onwards, Machiavelli was being quite widely read in England.” On Machiavelli’s influence in late Tudor and early Stuart England, see also, Anne Barton, “Livy, Machiavelli and Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*,” *Essays, Mainly Shakespearean*, rep. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 136-60; John Roe, *Shakespeare and Machiavelli*, Studies in Renaissance literature 9 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2002) 1-17; Hugh Grady, *Shakespeare, Machiavelli, and Montaigne: Power and Subjectivity from Richard II to Hamlet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 26-57. It is certain that Shakespeare knew Machiavelli because Shakespeare mentioned Machiavelli’s name three times in his works: “Alençon, that notorious Machiavel?” (*1 Henry VI*, 5.6.74); “I can add colours to the chameleon, / Change shapes with Proteus for advantages, / And set the murderous Machiavel to school” (*3 Henry VI*, 3.2.191-93); “Am I politic? Am I subtle? Am I a Machiavel?” (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3.1.92-93).

nor is it possible they can resist them both” (384). It is in large part the error of the ruler in excessive control and visible control (fortress) that produces the multiplying resistors. In short, as the title of the chapter states, “Fortresses in generall doe more harme then good” (382, bk. 2, ch. 24).

Machiavelli shares the image of the fickle multitude as a Hydra. For example, he says in *Discourses* that “the people” have “unquiet mindes” (24, bk. 1, ch. 5); and he introduces Livy’s view of the multitude: “nothing is more vaine or inconstant than the multitude, as well our Author *Titus Livius*, as all other Historians doe affirme” (227, bk. 1, ch. 58). He perceives also in *The Prince* that “the nature of the people is changeable,” and advises the ruler that they are “easie to be perswaded to a matter; but it is hard also to settle them in that perswasion” because “they are unthankful, unconstant, dissemblers, they avoyd dangers, and are covetous of gain.”<sup>3</sup>

The fickleness of the multitude was a truth universally acknowledged, but it was epoch-making that Machiavelli analysed the role of the multitude in politics and their mob psychology.<sup>4</sup> This innovation is clearly shown by the words of Machiavelli himself. He refutes the “common proverb, that He who relyes upon the people, layes his foundation in the dirt,” and concludes:

he being a Prince that grounds thereupon, who can command, and is a man of courage, who hath his wits about him in his adversities, and wants not other preparations, and holds together the whole multitude animated with his valour and orders, shall not prove deceiv’d by them, and shall find he hath layd good foundations. (*Prince*, 296, ch. 9)

Machiavelli, moreover, asserts that gratifying peoples’ feelings is the best protection against

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<sup>3</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Edward Dacres, *Machiavelli*, 1640, vol. 1, 2 vols., Tudor Translations 39 (London: David Nutt, 1905) 279, ch. 6, 319, ch. 17.

<sup>4</sup> For Machiavelli’s view of the multitude, see J. S. McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989) 72-81.

rebellions or plots: “a Prince sufficiently secure[s] himself by shunning to be hated or contemned, and keeping himself in his peoples good opinion. . . . one of the powerfulllest remedies a Prince can have against conspiracies, is, not to be hated nor dispised by the universality”; though “alwaies he that conspires, beleeves the Princes death is acceptable to the subject,” “when he thinks it displeases them, he hath not the heart to venture on such a matter; for the difficulties that are on the conspirators side, are infinite” (*Prince*, 326, ch. 19). He summarises his analysis: “well ordered States, and discreet Princes have taken care withal diligence, not to cause their great men to fall into desperation, and to content the people, and so to maintaine them: for this is one of the most important businesses belonging to a Prince” (*Prince*, 327, ch. 19). “[H]aving the people his friend” is of crucial importance for a ruler (*Discourses*, 173, bk. 1, ch. 40).

Machiavelli’s emphasis on the importance of the people is also indicated in the following opinion: “now is it more necessary for all Princes. . . to satisfie their people than their soldiers” and “Nobles,” “because the people are more mighty than they” (*Prince*, 294, ch. 9; 333, ch. 19). Though Machiavelli usually underestimates Caesar’s achievements, he at least appreciates that Caesar “had the people of Rome to friend” (*Discourses*, 481, bk. 3, ch. 6). Finally, Machiavelli’s view of the people is clarified as follows:

the Prince which is the peoples enemy, can never well secure himselfe of them, because of their multitude; well may hee bee sure of the Nobles, they being but a few. The worst that a Prince can look for of the people become his enemy, is to be abandoned by them. . . . The Prince likewise is necessitated alwayes to live with the same people. . . . I will only conclude, that it is necessary for a Prince to have the people his friend; otherwise in his adversities he hath no helpe. (*Prince*, 294-95, ch. 9)

However, Machiavelli also teaches a ruler “to know how to make good use of that part which belongs to a beast, as well as that which is proper to a man” (*Prince*, 321, ch. 18).



Even if he stresses the importance of the people in politics, he does not forget to point out the significance of the beast-side of a ruler: people “must either be dallyed and flattered withall, or else be quite crusht” (*Prince*, 267, ch. 3). Machiavelli who knows the fickleness of the people also realises “the unprofitableness of a multitude without a head”; riotous subjects are compared to Hydra’s nine reborn heads (*Discourses*, 179, bk. 1, ch. 44; 384, bk. 2, ch. 24). In other words, the leader of a rebellion is the lethal head of the many-headed Hydra, and if the rebellion has no leader, the violent people (the vicious Hydra) are useless.

Here, we have to reconsider the comparison of the multitude to the many-headed monster from the point of view of princes, since *The Prince* is a book for princes about the principles of governance.<sup>5</sup> The metaphor of Hydra subtly implies that Machiavelli identifies a prince with Hercules. This is more than a mere hint. The notion of Herculean monarchs was in vogue among Renaissance monarchs, as discovered in Chapter 2. The monarchs encouraged the people to regard their rules as virtuous. “Virtue” or “virtù,” which was a keyword for Machiavelli, was also a word used to describe Hercules, just as “vice” was a word used to depict Hydra. Hence, in order to understand the Hydra-headed multitude in *The Prince*, we have to change our viewpoint to that of rulers who compared themselves to the virtuous Hercules.

First, let us survey the reception history of the virtuous Hercules. This theme is originally seen in Xenophon and Cicero, whose work was drawn on to make Hercules an

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<sup>5</sup> Machiavelli dedicated *Il principe* (*The Prince*) to the Medici family, rulers of Florence; and in the book he told his own experience as a foreign secretary in Florence, and provided a guide on how to acquire power and keep it in real politics, citing many lessons of history. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, eds., Introduction, *The Prince*, by Niccolò Machiavelli, trans. Russell Price, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) ix-xxiv. See also, J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, 2nd pbk. ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

“ideal hero and personification of *vertu* throughout Europe” in the Renaissance.<sup>6</sup> The fable Xenophon cited from the Sophist Prodicus was commonly known as the Choice of Hercules or Hercules at the Crossroads:

When Heracles was passing from boyhood to youth’s estate, wherein the young, now becoming their own masters, show whether they will approach life by the path of virtue or the path of vice, he went out into a quiet place, and sat pondering which road to take. And there appeared two women of great stature making towards him. The one was fair to see and of high bearing; and her limbs were adorned with purity, her eyes with modesty; sober was her figure, and her robe was white. The other was plump and soft, with high feeding. Her face was made up to heighten its natural white and pink, her figure to exaggerate her height.<sup>7</sup>

The first woman is called “Virtue”; and the second woman is called “Happiness” or nicknamed “Vice.”<sup>8</sup> Cicero reintroduced this famous fable in his *De Officiis*, where he called the two roads Hercules saw “the path of Pleasure” and “the path of Virtue.”<sup>9</sup>

In spite of the huge influence of Xenophon and Cicero on European culture, the fable of the choice of Hercules sank into oblivion during the Middle Ages. A probable reason, as Panofsky observes, is that the fable was too pagan and secular to be accepted by the medieval Christian church. Its rediscovery awaited the Renaissance fusion of Christianity and paganism.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Edmund H. Dickerman and Anita M. Walker, “The Choice of Hercules: Henry IV as Hero,” *Historical Journal* 39.2 (1996) 320; Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Volume II Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 123.

<sup>7</sup> Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, trans. E. C. Merchant, *Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apologia*, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1923) 2.1.21-22.

<sup>8</sup> Xenophon 2.1.30, 2.1.26.

<sup>9</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Officiis*, trans. Walter Miller, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1913) 1.32.118, 3.5.25.

<sup>10</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst mit einem Nachwort zur Neuauflage von Dieter Wuttke*, rep. ed., Studien der Bibliothek Warburg 18 (Berlin: Gerb. Mann Verlag, 1997) 156; Erwin Panofsky, *Hercule à la croisée des chemins: et autres matériaux figuratifs de l’Antiquité dans l’art plus récent*, trans. Danièle Cohn, Idées et recherches (Paris: Flammarion, 1999) 160. See also Erika Tietze-Conrat, “Notes on ‘Hercules at the Crossroads,’” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 14.3-4 (1951) 305-09; Theodor Mommsen, “Petrarch and the Story of the Choice of Hercules,” *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 16.3-4 (1953) 178-79.

The dawn of the Renaissance was heralded by the risen Hercules, as Jean Seznec pointed out in his *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*: “we can speak of a Renaissance from the day Hercules resumed his athletic breadth of shoulder, his club, and his lion’s skin.”<sup>11</sup> Emma Stafford also states that the “fourteenth to sixteenth centuries . . . see a revival of the idea of providing a systematic account of his [Hercules’] exploits, which . . . had been attempted in both poetry and prose in antiquity.”<sup>12</sup> It would be more appropriate to specify that the Renaissance started from the day when the *virtuous Hercules* was revived. “Renaissance Florentines regarded the virtuous Hercules as the legendary founder of their city, and as early as 1281 the mythological hero had appeared on the official seal of Florence.”<sup>13</sup> The great Chancellor of the Florentine Republic and Humanist, Coluccio Salutati, wrote in his *De laboribus Herculis* in 1406: “virtute, quam significat Hercules (virtue, which Hercules signifies)”; an extremely significant remark, providing a basis for the virtuous Hercules in future generations.<sup>14</sup> After Salutati, the Medici such as Lorenzo, Giovanni, the future Pope Leo X, and Cosimo I used Hercules in their artistic patronage “to promote an image of themselves as virtuous Florentines”; and by “the early sixteenth century this familial identification had become so well established that Cosimo, even before he became Duke of Florence in 1537, had begun to envision himself as a Herculean figure.”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Cosimo I compared his labours “for peace and prosperity in

<sup>11</sup> Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art*, trans. Barbara F. Sessions, Bollingen Series 38 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953) 211.

<sup>12</sup> Emma Stafford, *Herakles, Gods and Heroes of the Ancient World* (London: Routledge, 2012) 206.

<sup>13</sup> Roger J. Crum, “‘Cosmos, the World of Cosimo’: The Iconography of the Uffizi Façade,” *Art Bulletin* 71.2 (1989) 245. See also Leopold D. Ettlinger, “Hercules Florentinus,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 16 (1972) 119-42; Maria Monica Donato, “Hercules and David in the Early Decoration of the Palazzo Vecchio: Manuscript Evidence,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54 (1991) 83-98.

<sup>14</sup> Coluccio Salutati, *De laboribus Herculis*, ed. B. L. Ullman, 2 vols. (Zürich: Thesaurus mundi, 1951) 2.357. See also Eugenio Garin, *L’educazione in Europa, 1400-1600: Problemi e programmi*, 2nd ed., Biblioteca di cultura moderna 521 (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1966) 81, 91.

<sup>15</sup> Crum 245. See also Kurt W. Forster, “Metaphors of Rule: Political Ideology and History in the

Tuscany” to the Twelve Labours of Hercules; and indeed the inscription,

“HERCVLEE.VIRTVTIS.” was carved on a medal of Cosimo I.<sup>16</sup>

A shift in the understanding of the Herculean virtue of which Greek Xenophon and Roman Cicero wrote is indicated in Petrarch’s poem, *Italia mia (Al Signori d’Italia)* cited at the end of Machiavelli’s *Prince*:

Virtù contr’ al furore  
Prendera l’arme, e fia il combatter corto:  
Che l’antico valore  
Ne gli Italici cor non è [anchor] morto.

Vertue against fury shall advance the fight,  
And it i’ th’ combate soon shall put to flight:  
For th’ old Roman valor is not dead,  
Nor in th’ Italians breasts extinguished. (357, ch. 26)

In 1640 Edward Dacres translated this poem as above, but Russell Price translates it into

English in his edition of *The Prince* (1988): “Valour will take up arms against wild attacks;

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Portraits of Cosimo I de’ Medici,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 15 (1971) 72-82; Paul William Richelson, *Studies in the Personal Imagery of Cosimo I de’ Medici, Duke of Florence*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York: Garland Publishing, 1978) 79-106; Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X, and the Two Cosimos* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984) 143-52; Friedrich Polleroß, “From the Exemplum Virtutis to the Apotheosis: Hercules as an Identification Figure in Portraiture: An Example of the Adoption of Classical Forms of Representation,” *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation*, ed. Allan Ellenius (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) 37; Philip Jacks and William Caferro, *The Spinelli of Florence: Fortunes of a Renaissance Merchant Family* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001) 134-40; Etlinger 139-42.

<sup>16</sup> Forster 81, 79. Leon Battista Alberti also correlates virtue with Hercules: “At the same time it is good to encourage young men to the pursuit of excellence. One should, in every discussion, praise good men to them. Show them how anyone well adorned with noble qualities deserves to be much loved by all men. Glorify good men in many ways. Act so that if our young men cannot attain the highest kind of excellence, at least they will desire to reach a high and outstanding level of praise and dignity. As they highly esteem excellence for themselves, they will also honor it in anyone else who possesses it. The ancients, at their rituals and feasts, used to rehearse in song the praises of their greatest men, those in whom extraordinary excellence had been manifested and had been wonderfully serviceable to many people. Such persons as *Hercules*, Aesculapius, Mercury, and Ceres were much celebrated and were called gods. This was done both to give due reward to these and to incite others to zeal for heroism and to a desire for similar praise and glory. What a prudent and useful custom! What a good example! (emphasis added).” See Leon Battista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence, Books One to Four: I libri della famiglia*, trans. Renée Neu Watkins, reissued ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2004) 79; Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia, Opere volgari*, ed. Cecil Grayson, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1960) 67. Renée Neu Watkins translates the word “virtù” into “excellence.”

and the battle will be short; for the ancient valour is still strong in Italian hearts.”<sup>17</sup> It is true that Machiavelli uses the word “virtù” in a variety of senses: “virtues,” “valour,” “good qualities,” “ability,” “skill,” “energy,” “determination,” “strength,” “spiritedness,” “courage,” and “prowess.”<sup>18</sup> However, Price’s translation does not convey the full implications of the text because the word “virtù” should be read as “virtue,” in this context, without the limiting interpretation, as Dacres translated it.<sup>19</sup> The analysis of the word “virtù” in Machiavelli is at the centre of his book, and nobody would deny its revolutionary impact upon European political thought. This polysemic word not only makes the interpretation of the text more complex, but also suggests that the Renaissance was an age in which political thought radically changed: “Several currents of Renaissance thought demonstrate that the understanding of virtue was a matter of concern during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and that the world’s[sic] meaning was changing.”<sup>20</sup>

It could be argued that Petrarch’s poem marks the change from Medieval virtue to Renaissance virtue; from divine or feminine virtue to human or masculine virtue.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Russell Price, eds. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 91, ch. 26.

<sup>18</sup> Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, eds., Appendix B: Notes on the Vocabulary of *The Prince*, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, by Niccolò Machiavelli, trans. Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 103-04.

<sup>19</sup> Mansfield states as follows: “It is no wonder that Machiavelli’s translators have difficulty in rendering *virtù*. Sometimes they simply leave it untranslated, as if to isolate it in the sixteenth century, where it cannot affect us today” (7). For the influence of “virtù” on Elizabethan literature, see Rolf Soellner, *Shakespeare’s Patterns of Self-Knowledge* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972) 31: “the fact that characters who recognized no limitations for their selves, such as Tamburlain and Doctor Faustus, were created also proves that Machiavellian *virtù* appealed to the Elizabethan imagination.”

<sup>20</sup> Jerrold E. Seigel, “Virtù in and since the Renaissance,” *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Wiener, vol. 4, 5 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1973-74) 477. I owe the discussion of the history of “virtue” to Seigel. See also, Russell Price, “The Senses of ‘Virtù’ in Machiavelli,” *European Studies Review* 3 (1973) 315-45; Mansfield, 7-8: “Machiavelli was, to say the least, present at the origin of a revolution in morality, which can be defined loosely in our terms as a change from virtue protected by religion to self-interest justified by secularism.”

<sup>21</sup> St. Augustine compared “Virtus” to a pagan goddess; virtue assumed a feminine character in the Middle Ages. Saint Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. William M. Green, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 2, 7 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1963) 4.20.A. See also, Mommsen 179.

Petrarchan virtue is associated with the masculine Hercules. Petrarch wrote his *De vita solitaria* (*The Life of Solitude*) in 1346, and mentioned the choice of Hercules in two different places, referring to Cicero's *De officiis* and Xenophon: "Hercules did so on entering manhood, as is testified by Xenophon, the pupil of Socrates, and by Cicero"; "Hercules too attained in solitude that wholesome plan of life which I have mentioned in the preceding book, when, hesitating long and much as though at a parting of the ways, he ultimately spurned the way of pleasure and took possession of the path of virtue, and marching indefatigably along its course he was raised not only to the apex of human glory but to a reputation of divinity."<sup>22</sup> As we have seen, Cicero explains that the story of the Choice of Hercules or Hercules at the Crossroads shows Hercules choosing between the paths of virtue or pleasure. This story was "practically forgotten during the Middle Ages," but it was Petrarch that recalled it first in the Renaissance; and this supports the Seznek's argument that the Renaissance started from the rebirth of Hercules.<sup>23</sup> In other words, after Petrarch, the attributes of virtue changed from feminine to masculine. When Petrarch wrote in the poem: "virtue will take up arms against wild attacks; and the battle will be short; for the ancient valour is still strong in Italian hearts," he must have thought about Hercules whose "virtue is first of all manliness, courage, strength."<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Petrarch

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<sup>22</sup> Francis Petrarch, *The Life of Solitude*, ed. Jacob Zeitlin (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1924) 1.4.2; 2.9.4: "the preceding book" refers to 1.4.2. See also, Mommsen 182-83.

<sup>23</sup> Seigel 477.

<sup>24</sup> Seigel 477. An example of masculine virtue after Petrarch can be found in Giannozzo Manetti's *De dignitate et excellentia hominis* (*On the Dignity of Man*) in 1452: "O . . . you kings, princes, emperors—you have been given a nature and a destiny of unmeasurable dignity and excellence, to your rule and command have been made subject all things on earth, . . . —let your chief aim be virtue. *Tread vice underfoot but love virtue* with your whole mind and soul; give your heart to it, embrace it; it is by practicing it without remission or neglect that you will prosper and know peace—nay, you will be made like to the immortal God, for then you will be of one mind and will with Him; for you have in common with God the duty of knowing and willing (emphasis added)." See Giannozzo Manetti, *On the Dignity of Man*, trans. Bernard Murchland, *Two Views of Man: Pope Innocent III, On the Misery of Man, Giannozzo Manetti, On the Dignity of Man*, Milestones of Thought in the History of Ideas (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1966) 102-03; Giannozzo Manetti, *De dignitate et excellentia hominis*, ed. Elizabeth R. Leonard, *Thesaurus mundi* 12 (Padova: in aedibus Antenoreis, 1975) 142-43. "Tread vice

changed the conception from a Christian one to a human, pagan, or “secular” one; Petrarch “never, either explicitly or implicitly, derived *virtus* from God, as St. Augustine and every other Christian theologian had done very specifically.”<sup>25</sup>

This reconsideration and reintroduction of the notion of “virtue” aroused old, but at the same time new, discussion on “the opposition of virtue and fortune.”<sup>26</sup> As Hanna Fenichel Pitkin points out, “fortune is always juxtaposed to *virtù*” in Machiavelli’s works.<sup>27</sup> Petrarch in his *Rerum familiarum libri* (*Letters on Familiar Matters*) says that fortune is “the mistress of all human affairs except for virtue.”<sup>28</sup> Machiavelli also states that we can change our fortune by virtue, a principle that can be applied in governance. Of course, even in Machiavelli, we see some medieval aspects in the conception of “virtue,” for he also respects the power of fortune: “I avow therefore this to be very true, as by many histories wee may see it, that men may well follow fortune, but not oppose it, they may well weave her webs, but not breake them” (*Discourses* 413-14, bk. 2, ch. 29). Not only in “many histories” but also in his contemporary Italy, he found that many people thought their fate was controlled by fortune:

It is not unknown unto me, how that many have held opinion, and still hold it, that the affaires of the world are so governd by fortune, and by God, that men by their wisdom cannot amend or alter them; or rather that there is no remedy for them: and hereupon they would think that it were of no availe to take much paines in any thing, but leave all to be governd by chance. This opinion hath gain’d the more credit in our dayes, by reason of the great alteration of things, which we have of late seen, and do every day see, beyond all humane conjecture: (*Prince*, 349, ch. 25)

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underfoot but love virtue” reminds us of the fight between Hercules and Hydra.

<sup>25</sup> Mommsen 191. See also, W. R. Newell, “How Original is Machiavelli?: A Consideration of Skinner’s Interpretation of Virtue and Fortune,” *Political Theory* 15.4 (1987) 612-14.

<sup>26</sup> Seigel 478. See also, Mansfield 47-52; Newell 612-34.

<sup>27</sup> Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *Fortune Is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Thought of Niccolò Machiavelli with a New Afterword* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 155.

<sup>28</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarum libri I-VIII*, trans. Aldo S. Bernaro, vol. 1, 3 vols. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1975) 20, bk. 1.2.

However, Machiavelli casts doubt on this popular opinion:

upon which, I sometimes thinking, am in some parte inclind to their opinion: neverthelesse not to extinguish quite our owne free will, I think it may be true, that Fortune is the mistrisse of one halfe of our actions; but yet that she lets us have rule of the other half, or little lesse. (*Prince*, 349, ch. 25)

Furthermore, he emphasises the power of human freedom: “God will not do every thing himself, that he may not take from us our free will, and part of that glory that belongs to us” (*Prince*, 355, ch. 26); “Wherefore let men never abandon themselves: being they know not what shall become of them in the end, the passages of their fortunes being, through crooked and unknowne wayes, they should ever hope, and so hoping put on still, and never give over in despayre, whatsoever chance or trouble they be falne into” (*Discourses*, 414, bk. 2, ch. 29). In short, as Seigel points out:

Unlike other Renaissance writers, Machiavelli refused to accept fortune’s strange power as a mystery beyond man’s ken and separate from his nature. On the contrary, Machiavelli made fortune derive from human nature almost to the same extent as virtù.<sup>29</sup>

Even if Machiavelli stresses the power of human freedom, nevertheless, he recognises that the goddess Fortune is fickle and “varying” (*Prince*, 352, ch. 25).<sup>30</sup> The “affairs of the world are so various” (*Prince*, 298, ch. 10), therefore people, especially rulers, have to ascertain the current of the times. In this sense, fickle Fortune is closely connected to so-called Machiavellism. Machiavelli says:

it suffices to conceive this, that a Prince, and especially a new Prince, cannot observe all those things, for which men are held good; he being often forc’d, for the maintenance of his State, to do contrary to his faith, charity, humanity, and religion: and therefore it behooves him to have a mind so disposd, as to

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<sup>29</sup> Seigel 480.

<sup>30</sup> On Fortune in Machiavelli, see, Thomas Flanagan, “The Concept of Fortuna in Machiavelli,” *The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli’s Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Parel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 127-56.



turne and take the advantage of all winds and fortunes; and as formerly I said, not forsake the good, while he can; but to know how to make use of the evil upon necessity. (*Prince*, 323, ch. 18)

Here, Machiavelli advises that, if princes do not swim with the tide, they will not succeed.

He emphasises the importance of princes' forecasting "all winds and fortunes":

men in their proceedings, and the rather in actions of consequence should consider the times, and conforme themselves thereunto; and those that by their evill choice, or naturall inclination disagree with the times, most commonly live unhappily, and their actions have but ill successes. (*Discourses*, 494, bk. 3, ch. 8)

He repeats his theory in another place: "the occasion of mens good or evill fortunes

depends upon the manner of the encounter of their proceedings with the times" (*Discourses*, 496, bk. 3, ch. 9).

Machiavelli thinks that Fortune or the goddess Fortune is "various" (*Discourses*, 419, bk. 2, ch. 30); the goddess had been painted as a figure standing on a ball in the Renaissance, as we saw in Chapter 1: this iconography is consistent with Machiavelli's view of fortune.<sup>31</sup> However, this consistency is not as simple as it looks, because

Machiavelli despises the goddess who has a characteristic of women:

I think it true, that it is better to be heady than wary; because Fortune is a mistresse; and it is necessary, to keep her in obedience to ruffle and force her: and we see, that she suffers her self rather to be masterd by those, than by others that proceed coldly. And therefore, as a mistresse, shee is a friend to young men, because they are lesse respective, more rough, and command her with more boldnesse. (*Prince*, 352, ch. 25)

This citation expresses the discrimination and prejudice against women that were widely held assumptions at that time.<sup>32</sup> However, an interesting interpretation of this citation is

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<sup>31</sup> See also *Discourses*, 592, bk. 3, ch. 31: "they [the Citizens] shall change as her [Fortune's] wheele turnes."

<sup>32</sup> Pitkin 144: "Machiavelli appears to be the first to use that metaphor as a way of suggesting the sexual conquest of fortune, introducing into the realm of politics and history concerns about manliness,

suggested by an Italian proverb, of which Machiavelli must have known, “Buon cavallo e mal cavallo vuole sprone, e buona femina e mala femina vuol bastone (Both good and bad horses require the spur, just as both good and bad women require the stick).”<sup>33</sup>

Here, let us recall that Holbein portrayed the common people as a many-headed monster standing with a *stick* on a sphere floating in the water. The many-headed multitude who has a stick is comparable to the goddess Fortune on her unstable ball. Machiavelli says in the chapter titled “That Princes should take a care, not to incur contempt or hatred”: “To be held various, light, effeminate, faint-hearted, unresolv’d, these make him be contemnd and thought base, which a Prince should shun like rocks, and take a care that in all his actions there appear magnanimity, courage, gravity, and valor” (*Prince*, 325, ch. 19). A ruler must avoid the womanlike character of the goddess Fortune. Petrarch, referring to Cicero, thought the word “virtue” derived from the Latin word for man, “vir.”<sup>34</sup> In the Florentine Renaissance, femininity is a metaphor for disorder, and to be manly like Hercules and to conquer femininity came to be regarded as the essence of virtue.<sup>35</sup>

In the following sections, we will adduce concrete instances of the virtuous Hercules and its applications and adaptations in more conservative political thought. Moreover, examining the more traditional, moralistic, or medieval concept of virtue helps to clarify the differences between Machiavelli’s revolutionary “virtù” and the conservative virtue,

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effeminacy, and sexual prowess.”

<sup>33</sup> This proverb is in Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. Vittore Branca, Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio 4 (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1976) 9.9, 832. The translation is by Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. Mark Musa and Peter Bondanella (New York: Norton, 1982) 9.9, 592.

<sup>34</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarum libri XVII-XXIV*, trans. Aldo S. Bernardo, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 262, bk. 23.2. See also Seigel 477.

<sup>35</sup> Patricia Simons, “Hercules in Italian Renaissance Art: Masculine Labour and Homoerotic Libido,” *Art History* 31.5 (2008) 632-64.

presented, for instance, by Baldassare Castiglione in his *The Book of the Courtier* (1528) and Erasmus in his *Institutio principis Christiani* (*The Education of a Christian Prince*) (1516) and *Enchiridion militis christiani* (*The Handbook of the Christian Soldier*) (1501). Machiavelli, Castiglione, and Erasmus were quite influential writers who taught the art of governance to European monarchs, but Machiavelli and the two more traditional thinkers held opposite political and moralistic viewpoints. Castiglione and Erasmus, like Machiavelli, also discuss the concept of “virtue,” citing Herculean virtue in their books.

Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* (1528) is one of the most influential Renaissance Humanist texts. Castiglione mentions Hercules to explain courtly virtue in this work, and we need to analyse the traditional virtue to explore Herculean Coriolanus’s virtue. *The Book of the Courtier* was translated into English by Thomas Hoby and published in 1561.<sup>36</sup> The book was quite influential among courtiers of the Tudor age, as shown by the fact that it was reprinted three times, in 1577, 1588, and 1603.<sup>37</sup> As Thomas Hoby says in the dedication to the Lord Henry Hastings, *The Book of the Courtier* is useful to all noblemen and noblewomen: to “Princes and Greate men, it is a rule to rule themselves that rule others, and one of the bookes that a noble Philosopher exhorted a certaine kyng to provide him, and diligently to searche, for in them he shoulde finde written suche matters, that friendes durst not utter unto kinges”; “To yonge Gentlemen, an encouraging to garnishe their minde with *morall vertues*, and their bodye with comely

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<sup>36</sup> Walter Raleigh, ed., Introduction, *The Book of the Courtier*, by Baldassarre Castiglione, trans. Thomas Hoby, Tudor Translations 1.23 (New York: AMS Press, 1967) xxxix; George Bull, ed., Introduction, *The Book of the Courtier*, by Baldesar Castiglione, trans. George Bull, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 1976) 13.

<sup>37</sup> Frank Kermode and John Hollander, eds., *Literature of Renaissance England*, The Oxford Anthology of English Literature, 6 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) 85; Virginia Cox, ed., Introduction, *The Book of the Courtier*, by Baldassare Castiglione, trans. Thomas Hoby, The Everyman Library (London: Everyman, 1974) xxix-xxxi; Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione’s Cortegiano* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) 64.

exercises, and both the one and the other with honest qualities to attaine unto their noble ende (emphasis added)”; and finally “to them all in general, a storehouse of most necessary implements for the conversacion, use, and training up of mans life with Courtly demeaners.”<sup>38</sup> In short, the point of Hoby’s dedication is to express that *The Book of the Courtier* is a model of “the Courtly facions, comely exercises, and *noble virtues* (emphasis added)” (4). Castiglione himself sums up as follows: “The ende therfore of a perfect Courtier. . . is. . . , without feare or perill to displease him [the Prince], . . . to be bould to stande with him in it, and to take courage after an honest sort at the favour which he hath gotten him throughe his good qualities, to disswade him from everie ill pourpose, and to set him in the waye of *virtue* (emphasis added)” (295). Castiglione underlines the importance of virtue for rulers and courtiers, but, as this quotation illustrates, Castiglione’s virtue differs from that of Machiavelli.<sup>39</sup>

It is in the Fourth Book, “of the end of a Courtier, and of honest loue,” that Castiglione refers to Hercules. Theseus and Hercules like “noble couraged *Demigoddes* (emphasis added)” tried to slay “cruell and wicked Tirannes” such as “Procustes, Scyron, Caccus, Diomedes, Antheus and Gerion”; and Theseus and Hercules “kept continual and mortall war” against “such intollerable *monstres* (for Tyrannes ought not to be called by other name) unto Hercules were made Temples, and sacrifices, and godlye honours given him (emphasis added)” (326). Among these “Tirannes,” “Gerion,” or a triple-bodied,

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<sup>38</sup> Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Thomas Hoby, ed. Virginia Cox, The Everyman Library (London: J. M. Dent, 1994) 4-5.

<sup>39</sup> “For Machiavelli. . . the ordinary moral virtues are more a hindrance than a help to effective political action. Although the well-endowed statesman is conscious of the need to *appear* virtuous, he is able and ready to depart from moral rules when it is expedient to do so, since he aims not at the good but at the useful. Castiglione was not prepared to see how the good and the useful could be separated.” Aldo Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry, and Courtesy from Ottonian Germany to the Italian Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 242. See also, Guido Ruggiero, *Machiavelli in Love: Sex, Self, and Society in the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 191-92.

four-winged giant, is appropriate to be called a monster, and Hercules killed Geryon as his tenth labour.<sup>40</sup> Castiglione refers to the demigod Hercules here in order to emphasise that Hercules is the model of an ideal and virtuous prince. He says that virtue makes a prince a demigod: a prince “shall be moste glorious and moste deerlye beloved both to God and manne: through whose grace he shall atteine unto that *heroicall and noble vertue*, that shall make him passe the boundes of the nature of manne, and shall rather be called *a Demy God*, then a manne mortall (emphasis added)” (312). In other words, Castiglione clearly equates Hercules, the virtuous demigod, with a virtuous prince.<sup>41</sup>

In this context, Castiglione cites the names of English kings, Henry VII and VIII:

Henry Prince of Wales, who presently groweth under his most noble father, *in all kinde of vertue*, like a tender ympe under the shadow of an excellent tree and laden with frute, to renue him much more beawtiful and plentuous whan time shal come, for as our *Castilio* writeth from thens, and promiseth at hys retourn to tell us more at the full, a man can judge no lesse, but that nature was willing in this Prince to show her counning, planting in one body alone so *many excellent vertues*, as were sufficient to decke out infinit. (emphasis added) (327)

The important thing is that Castiglione praises the virtue of Henry VIII, and regards Henry

<sup>40</sup> Ovid, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) 9.225-26.

<sup>41</sup> The tradition which regards the virtuous Hercules as a model of princes is indicated also in Jean Bodin's *The Six Books of a Commonweale* published in France in 1576 and translated into English by Richard Knolles in 1606. In Chapter V, Book II of the book, “Whether it be lawfull to lay violent hand upon a tyrant,” Bodin argues whether it is justifiable to kill a tyrant even if a king is a legitimate ruler. See Jean Bodin, *The Six Books of a Commonweale: A Facsimile Reprint of the English Translation of 1606, Corrected and Supplemented in the Light of a New Comparison with the French and Latin Texts*, trans. Richard Knolles, ed. Kenneth D. McRae, Harvard Political Classics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962) sig. V i<sup>v</sup>, fol. 218. He agrees that it is “a most faire and magnificall thing for a prince to take up armes to relieve a whole nation and people, unjustly oppressed by the crueltie of a tirant: As did the great *Hercules*, who traveling over a great part of the world with wonderfull prowes and valour destroyed many most *horrible monsters*, that is to say Tirants: and so delivered people without number among the gods: his posteritie for many worlds of yeares after, holding most great kingdomes, and other the imitatours of his virtues (emphasis added)”: Bodin sigs. V ij<sup>v</sup>-V iij<sup>r</sup>, fols. 220-21. Bodin's *The Six Books of the Commonwealth* was published in 1576, but he had a conservative view of virtue not like Machiavelli's, but like Castiglione's. See Donald R Kelley, “The Development and Context of Bodin's Method,” *Jean Bodin: Verhandlungen der Internationalen Bodin Tagung in München*, ed. Horst Denzer, Münchener Studien zur Politik 18 (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1973) 145: “Bodin and Machiavelli were literally worlds apart.”

VIII and Charles, Prince of Spain, as “heavenly Princis”: “God hath sent suche and so heavenly Princis upon the earth, and made them one like an other in youth, in mightines of armes, in state, in handsomnes and disposition of person, that they may also be minded alike in this good pourpose” (328). Even if the connection between the demigod Hercules and a virtuous king in the text is indirect, set in the context of Chapter 2, it confirms the association of a Herculean king with Henry VIII.<sup>42</sup>

Erasmus and Castiglione shared almost the same concept of virtue, and Erasmus also refers to Herculean virtue in his works. As Erasmus says in his *Institutio principis christiani* (*The Education of a Christian Prince*), a tutor always has to make sure that his prince, or his pupil, “loves and honours virtue as the most beautiful thing of all, the greatest source of happiness, and especially fitting for a prince”; and the tutor’s duty is “to sow the seeds of right conduct” and to teach “positively good principles” to his prince.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, although Erasmus’ *Enchiridion militis christiani* (*The Handbook of the Christian Soldier*) was written not for the education of a prince but for the education of a

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<sup>42</sup> The connection between Henry VIII and Hercules is indirect in Castiglione, but the direct connection can be found in Sebastian Brant’s *The Ship of Fools*, which was translated into English by Alexander Barclay in 1509:

This noble Prynce [Henry the eyght] begynnyth vertuously  
By justyce and pyte, his roylme to meynstayne  
So that he and his: without mo company  
May succour, our sores by his manhode soverayne  
And get with his owne hande Jerusalem agayne  
He passsyth Hercules in manhode and courage  
Havyng a respect uunto his tender age.

Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools*, trans. Alexander Barclay, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1874) 205.

<sup>43</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince: Institutio principis Christiani*, trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael J. Heath, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 27 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) 212-13, 211, 207. “A manuscript abstract [Brit. Mus., Royal Ms. 17 A XL IX] was made in 1550 by John Lord Lumley, and dedicated by him to his father-in-law to Lord Arundel,” but no English translation of *Institutio principis christiani* was published. E. J. Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus: A Bibliography to 1700* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) 130. See also, E. J. Devereux, *A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700*, Occasional Publication 3 (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1968) 20; O. Herding, ed., Einleitung, *Institutio principis christiani*, *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami: recognita et adnotatione critica instructa notisque illustrata*. Ord. 4. T. 1 (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1974) 130.

Christian knight, this book, too, advocates Herculean virtue which overcomes Hydra-like vice:

Fyrst of all that whan we be assaulted of vyces / imediatly we must gyve our selfe to prayer agayne / and desyre helpe of god. More over that temptacions to p[er]fyte men are not perylous: but also are very expedyent to the contynuaunce & preservyng of vertue. Last of al whan al other thyngs are full tamed than the vice of vaynglory even in ye chefe tyme of vertues layeth awaite: & this vice to be as it were *Hidra / whome Hercules fought withall a quycke monstre longe of lyfe & fruytful* / by reason of her own woundes / which at ye last ende whan all labours be overcome can scarce be destroyed.<sup>44</sup> (emphasis added)

The contrast between Herculean virtue and Hydra-like vice is also reflected in Erasmus' view of the multitude. Erasmus thinks that "the comen people is founde to be the moste myschevous auctoure or capitayne bothe of lyvyng and also of judgement"; and he scathingly calls the people "the unlerned and rude multytude whiche Christe dyed for" and "the unruly communes and. . . ragynge dregges of the cite" (sigs. L.vij.<sup>v</sup>, a. iiij.<sup>v</sup>, D.ij.<sup>r-v</sup>). He links the multitude with vice: "As touchynge the comen sorte of christen men thynke thus yt they were neuer more corrupte / no not amongst the gentyles / as appertaynyng to the opynions of their maners. The comen people of chrysten men be moost corrupte" (sig. L.viii.<sup>v</sup>). Erasmus adds that "without ceasyng we are beseged with so great a nombre of armed vices" against which "Hercules" fights (sig. A.ij.<sup>r</sup>).<sup>45</sup> Erasmus who wrote his books for a Christian prince or knight implies in his texts that the contrast between Herculean virtue and Hydra-like vice corresponds to the hostile relationship between Herculean monarchs or princes and the Hydra-headed multitude, and that they have to tame the

<sup>44</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *A booke called in latyn Enchiridion militis christiani, and in englysshe the manuell of the christen knyght replenysshed with moste holsome preceptes, made by the famous clerke Erasmus of Roterdame, to the whiche is added a newe and meruaylous profytable preface*, trans. William Tyndale, STC (2nd ed.): 10479 (London: Iohan Byddell, 1533) sig. E.iii.<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> See also, Desiderius Erasmus, *The Handbook of the Christian Soldier: Enchiridion militis christiani*, trans. Charles Fantazzi, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 66 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 9, 24, 25, 42, 49, 86.

vicious multitude by sowing “the seeds of right conduct” or using Herculean moralistic virtue.<sup>46</sup>

We have examined the representations of the virtuous Hercules by influential continental political thinkers such as Castiglione, Erasmus, and Machiavelli. Next we will turn to examples of the virtuous Hercules not in political works but in literary texts in England, for Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* was influenced not only by the continental thinkers but also by English literary works. Since Renaissance culture disseminated from Italy northward, it is fitting that this study, too, pursues the same course. In England, too, virtue was correlated with Hercules, and the concept altered from Castiglione’s and Erasmus’ moralistic virtue to Machiavelli’s realpolitik one.

John Skelton’s poem about Anglo-French rivalry in 1523 gives an appropriate example of the didactic virtuous Hercules who defeats vice. The title of the poem is “How the Doughty Duke of Albany Like a Coward Knight, Ran Away Shamefully with an Hundred Thousand Tratling Scots and Faint-Hearted Frenchmen, beside the Water of Tweed,” which refers to the Duke of Albany’s invasion of the English borders in 1523.<sup>47</sup> Skelton depicts the Duke of Albany, whose troops were defeated by the English Army, as a “coward knight” (398, 400). The poem is a keen satire against Albany, his army, and François I, the French king. As the poem puts it, Albany had “compassed / With the Frenche king / A false reckoning / To invade England”; but he “fled and durst not fight, / He ran away by night. . . / At the castle of Wark, / By the water of Tweed” (401, 400, 399). And “Our king most excellent / In martial prowess / Like unto *Hercules*,” “Noble Henry the

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<sup>46</sup> We should not forget that Erasmus compares himself to Hercules. His contempt for the multitude might suggest his superiority as Hercules to the Hydra-headed multitude.

<sup>47</sup> John Skelton, “How the Doughty Duke of Albany Like a Coward Knight, Ran Away Shamefully with an Hundred Thousand Tratling Scots and Faint-Hearted Frenchmen, beside the Water of Tweed,” *The Complete Poems of John Skelton, Laureate*, ed. Philip Henderson, 2nd ed. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1948) 398.



Eight” defeated “wretched Scots” “of all manner *vice*” (emphasis added) (410, 401, 404).

The Herculean Henry VIII expelled Albany’s army from the territory of England. As Skelton writes, “Scots all the rabble. . . / Full of scabs and scawls. . . / Fled like a beast”; the Scots “like a beast” fleeing from the English army remind us of the vicious Hydra, because Henry VIII is compared to the virtuous Hercules (403, 404, 398).<sup>48</sup>

Skelton’s poem was used politically as Tudor propaganda; indeed, it was composed at Cardinal Wolsey’s suggestion. Wolsey knew that Skelton’s verse would attract a mass audience, and he “felt that the best method of broadcasting propaganda was through Skelton’s verse.”<sup>49</sup> However, even if the poem was political propaganda to show English superiority over the Scots and French, it does not imply any religious controversy among England, Scotland, and France yet, since the state religion of these three countries was still Catholic in 1523. As we shall see, Henry VIII’s chaotic Reformation around 1534, the year of the Act of Supremacy, brought dramatic changes in interpretations of the representations of Hercules and Hydra in England. The connotation of the word “virtue” also changed gradually in England as Protestants took power and regarded the Roman

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<sup>48</sup> Skelton’s description of Henry VIII as Hercules is persuasive because Skelton was a royal tutor of young Henry VIII and knew the prince well. Not only the biographical fact but also the fact that Skelton met Erasmus in England in 1499 might prove the possibility that Skelton knew the Renaissance representations of Hercules and Hydra by Erasmus. In fact, Erasmus’ testimony gave Skelton a job of a tutor in the royal household. See Greg Walker, *John Skelton and the Politics of the 1520s*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 40-41; David R. Carlson, “Royal Tutors in the Reign of Henry VII,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 22.2 (1991) 265-66; Peter Gordon and Denis Lawton, *Royal Education: Past, Present and Future* (London: Frank Cass, 1999) 24-26; Vincent Gillespie, “Justification by Faith: Skelton’s *Replycacion*,” *The Long Fifteenth Century: Essays for Douglas Gray*, eds. Helen Cooper and Sally Mapstone (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 276. Erasmus wrote a letter to the prince to assure Skelton’s ability as a tutor, and in the letter, Erasmus says, “were it not that you are thither bound already of your own free choice. . . ; and that you have a bard of your own in Skelton, the great light and ornament of English letters, who can not only inspire but perfect your studies” in Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1-141 (1484-1500)*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) 197. Moreover, he did not forget adding to the significance of pursuit of virtue: “posterity attributes to men’s virtue rather than their fortune.” See Erasmus 196. See also Carlson 265. Also from the point of view of Humanism, we can say that Henry VIII as the virtuous Hercules defeated the Scots and French king as the vicious Hydra.

<sup>49</sup> Walker 192.

Catholic Church with hostility.

This conceptual change after the Reformation is reflected in Anthony Cope's *The Historie of Two of the Moste Noble Capitaines of the Worlde, Anniball and Scipio of Theyr Dyvers Battailes and Victories, Excedyng Profitable to Reade, Gathered and Translated into Englishe, out of Titus Livius* in 1544; and the comparison between the virtuous Hercules and Hydra-like vicious tyrants is clearly expressed.<sup>50</sup> As the title shows, the book was partly translated into English from Livy's *The Roman History*. It was reprinted several times.<sup>51</sup> Cope dedicates the book "TO THE MOST MIGHTY AND VICTORIOVS PRINCE, AND HIS moste redoubted soveraigne lorde, Henry the viii by the grace of god kyng of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defender of the faith, and of the church of England and also of Irelande in earthe the supreme head."<sup>52</sup> This dedication reflects the political contexts of the tense international situation in Europe and religious reformation in England. The purpose of the book was to let the English king and courtiers know that the acts of Hannibal and Scipio were a textbook to learn how to rule England in the turbulent period. Hannibal and Scipio set a good example in politics and military tactics:

out of Titus Livius, and other autoure, the lyves, the policies, and the marciall actes of two the moste woorthie capitaynes, of the two moste renoumed empires of the worlde, that is to saie, of Anniball of Carthage, and Scipio of Rome, I woulde bringe the same into our englyshe tounge: whereby, besyde the

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<sup>50</sup> Anthony Cope, *The Historie of Two the Moste Noble Capitaines of the Worlde, Anniball and Scipio of Theyr Dyvers Battailes and Victories, Excedyng Profitable to Reade, Gathered and Translated into Englishe, out of Titus Livius*, STC (2nd ed.): 5718 (London: 1544). After Anthony Cope, who was a son of Wiliam Cope, cofferer to Henry VII, was educated at Oxford, he travelled in Germany, France, and Italy, where he translated Galen and Hippocrates to which Erasmus referred; therefore he must have read Erasmus. When Henry VIII married Katherine Parr in 1543, Cope started to serve the queen, and in 1544 he published this book, which was dedicated to Henry VIII. See Elizabeth Allen, "Cope, Sir Anthony (1486/7-1551)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, Oxford University Press, 13 Dec 2006 <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk:80/view/article/6250>>.

<sup>51</sup> See Allen. The almost full translation of Livy's *Roman History* by Philemon Holland was published in London, 1600.

<sup>52</sup> Cope sig. a ii<sup>r</sup>.

pleasaunt bestowyng of tyme, in the readyng therof, men also may learne bothe to dooe displeasure to theyr ennemio[sic], and to avoyde the crafty and dangerous baites, which shall be layde for them. (sig. a iii<sup>r</sup>)

This book can be placed in the same category as the books for the education of princes such as those of Castiglione and Erasmus, whose *The Education of a Christian Prince* (*Institutio principis Christiani*) was dedicated to Prince Charles, the future Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.<sup>53</sup> The book also shows the influence of works of Machiavelli, who stressed the usefulness of Livy as a teacher of real politics in his *Discourses on Livy* and *The Prince*; Machiavellian political thought moved into English political spheres.

Cope praises Henry VIII not as a human being but as a demigod, and calls Henry “our english Hercules” (sig. a iiiv<sup>v</sup>). One of the reasons why Henry enjoys this title is that Hercules is a symbol of “honourable renoume,” “immortall fame” and “noble actes” (sig. a iiiv<sup>v</sup>). Hannibal and Scipio as human beings are used as a model of ideal leaders, but Henry VIII is the demigod Hercules, for his fame is greater than that of Hannibal and Scipio. Cope describes Hercules’ “virtuously. . . honourable travaile” (sig. a iii<sup>v</sup>). He relates it to Henry’s labours and expatiates upon the Hercules’ “honourable prayse”:

Hercules is accompted mooste woorthy the crowne of honourable prayse, as *the chief haunter of monsters*: I will nowe with his conquestes compare your moste famous subduyng of *the Romaine monster Hydra*, whose heddes wey so may, and the lest of them so pestylente, that it is to be thought, be could never (without the great asiistence of the divine power) have been subdued. Those his heddes, by the moste circumspect wisdom and providence of youre hyghnes, be almost cleane cutte of, and mortified, the venomous styng of ignorance plucked awaie, and hys power suppressed: so that the walles of hys denne of Rome tremble beholdyng your cristaal shield of prudence. . . . *Hercules* onely delyvered countreys from the bodily vexacion of *monsters and tyrantes*. (sigs. a iiiv<sup>r</sup>-a iiiv<sup>v</sup>) (emphasis added)

Cope regards Henry or “our english Hercules” as “the chief haunter of monsters,” one of

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<sup>53</sup> Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince* 200.

which is “the Romaine monster Hydra”: the labour of Herculean Henry is to subdue the Roman Catholic Church. The conceptual change of virtue is indicated in this task, which is obviously affected by the influence of the Reformation. The labours of Henry, including the extermination of the Roman Hydra, should be “vertuous enterprises” (sig. a iii<sup>v</sup>). However, if the task was attempted following the moralistic virtue about which Castiglione and Erasmus argued, it would result in failure to accomplish the task of subduing the vicious “*Romaine monster Hydra*.” The word “virtue” here is not equivalent to the moralistic or conservative virtue on which Skelton and Brant wrote before the Reformation, but signifies the Machiavellian masculine realpolitik “virtù,” “strength,” or “power.”

Even if these citations above from Cope are obvious flattery of Henry VIII, they convey some significant information on the Tudor academic, political, and religious contexts. First, the representation of Hercules as a model of monarchs follows the continental tradition which we discussed in Chapter 2. Cope in comparing the virtuous Henry VIII to Hercules is in the same academic tradition of Renaissance Humanism. Second, this book of Cope reflects the religious conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism in England; the change from the representations of Catholic Hercules and Protestant Hydra in France to those of Protestant Hercules and Catholic Hydra in England, as we have seen in Chapter 2, exemplifies the influence of the religious conversion. Third, this book implies the changing meaning of the word “virtue,” specially the decisive change brought by Machiavelli.

We have analysed the shifting implications of “virtue” through the representations of Hercules in the texts of Erasmus, Castiglione, Machiavelli, and Cope so far, but in the

following sections, we would like to exemplify it from iconological points of view because visual images of Hercules and Hydra clearly conveys the connotative shift from ethical politics to power politics in Europe. The conceptual change of “virtue” is illustrated in an emblem book in which Hercules killing Hydra is depicted on the title page (Fig. 4.1):

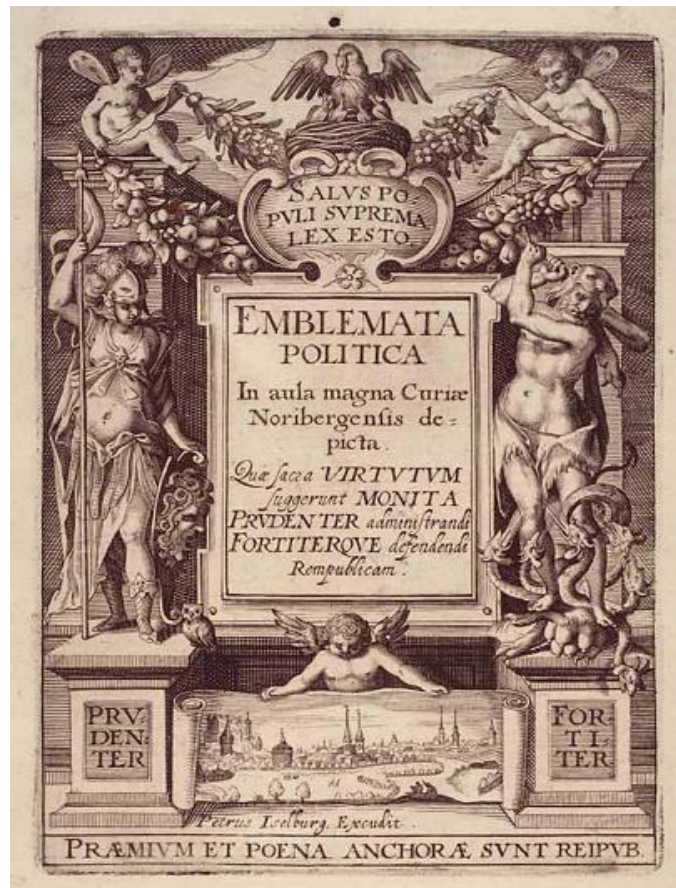


Fig. 4.1. Title Page of Peter Isselburg's *Emblemata Politica*, Nürnberg, 1617.<sup>54</sup>

Minerva with the owl is the goddess of wisdom, and the motto “PRVDENTER (prudently)” is engraved on the pedestal under her feet. On the pedestal of Hercules who has embodied “virtue” is engraved the motto “FORTITER (strongly).” The title page shows:

*Emblemata politica in aula magna Curiae Noribergensis depicta: Quae sacra virtutum*

*suggerunt monita prudenter administrandi fortiterque defendendi rempublicam (Political*

<sup>54</sup> Peter Isselburg, *Emblemata politica in aula magna Curiae Noribergensis depicta: Quae sacra virtutum suggerunt monita prudenter administrandi fortiterque defendendi rempublicam*, ed. Karl-Heinz Schreyll (Nürnberg: Hans Carl, 1980).

*Emblems depicted in the Great Hall of the Council of Nürnberg, representing the solemn precepts of the virtues as they relate to the prudent administration and valiant defence of the City Republic).*<sup>55</sup> As the title page indicates, virtues are related to prudence and masculine valiance, which is symbolised by sturdy Hercules fighting the Hydra. This Herculean representation is evidence for the connotative change of “virtue” all over Europe.

An emblem book entitled *Emblemata Regio Politica* published in Latin, 1653, by Juan de Solórzano Pereira, Spanish jurist, theologian, and political thinker show the other transition (Fig. 4.2):



Fig. 4.2. Title Page of Juan de Solórzano Pereira’s *Emblemata Regio Politica*, Madrid, 1653.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Frederick John Stopp, *The Emblems of the Altdorf Academy: Medals and Medal Orations, 1577-1626* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1974) 96; Jeffrey Chipps Smith, “Imaging and Imagining Nuremberg,” *Topographies of the Early Modern City*, eds. Arthur Groos, Hans-Jochen Schiewer and Markus Stock, *Transatlantische Studien zu Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* Bd. 3 (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008) 33-34.

<sup>56</sup> Juan de Solórzano Pereira, *Emblemata regio politica in centuriam unam redacta, et laboriosis at que*

Hercules can be recognised, fighting with Hydra, at the lower left. In order to clarify the representation, first, we have to decipher the picture's intentions step by step. As the title page shows, this book was dedicated to a Spanish king, Felipe IV; and "the work belongs to the larger tradition of books or treatises dealing with the education of a prince."<sup>57</sup> The book was written during the European expansion and conquest, and the title page bears some signs of this. Neptune, the god of the sea, has the earth on his abdomen, on which King Felipe sits: the earth is a symbol of the expansionism and the prosperity of Spain.<sup>58</sup> The woman named "AMERICA" at the right side of Felipe IV holds corn on the cob with her hand: corn was also a symbol of the discovery of the "New World" because it was introduced to Spaniards by "Indians." The two women sit on the two pillars respectively, but it is important to notice that Hercules is carved on the pedestal of the woman named "HISPANIA." The association between Hercules and the pillars was known as a motto "Plus Ultra" or "the Pillars of Hercules."<sup>59</sup> The Latin motto "Plus Ultra" which means "further beyond" symbolises European expansionism and colonialism. Originally Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, spread the motto over Europe, and Queen Elizabeth and King James also mentioned the motto.<sup>60</sup> The motto is related to Hercules' Tenth Labour, the

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*utilibus commentariis illustrata* (Matriti: Cum priuilegio in typographia Domin, Garciae Morras, 1653). The courtesy of the Warburg Institute Library.

<sup>57</sup> Karl Ludwig Selig, "Concerning Solórzano Pereyra's *Emblemata regio-politica* and Andrés Mendo's *Príncipe perfecto*," *Modern Language Notes* 71.4 (1956) 283.

<sup>58</sup> Jesús María González de Zárate, *Emblemas regio-politicos de Juan de Solórzano Pereira* (Madrid: Ediciones Tuero, 1987) 32.

<sup>59</sup> On "Plus Ultra" or "the Pillars of Hercules," see, Earl Rosenthal, "Plus Ultra, Non plus Ultra, and the Columnar Device of Emperor Charles V," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 34 (1971) 204-28; Earl E. Rosenthal, "The Invention of the Columnar Device of Emperor Charles V at the Court of Burgundy in Flanders in 1516," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973) 198-230; Sandra Sider, "Transcendent Symbols for the Hapsburgs: *Plus Ultra* and the Columns of Hercules," *Emblematica* 4.2 (1986) 257-71.

<sup>60</sup> Also in England, many intellectuals cited this motto in their books, and the Pillars of Hercules were painted in pictures and woodcuts such as a portrait of Queen Elizabeth (Fig. 4.3):







“Plus Ultra” as their motto: it was a symbol of expansionism.

Besides the traces of the European colonialism expressed in the engraving of Juan de Solórzano Pereira, more important is that this image implies the changing meaning of the word “virtue” in the period after Petrarch’s influence. This book can be categorised as the education of a virtuous prince, and some reasons are indicated in the engraving. For example, the goddess on the left with the cross and the one on the right with the Bible symbolise “FIDES (Faith)” and “RELIGIO (Religion)” respectively: the two goddesses stress the importance of piety to govern the Catholic nation. On the surface of the right pedestal, a hive and bees are depicted (Fig. 4.4):



Fig. 4.4. “Omnia nos itidem (We all likewise),” from the Enlarged Part of Fig. 4.2.

The motto “Omnia nos itidem” abbreviates the line in Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* (*On the Nature of Things*), Book 3: “floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia libant, omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta, aurea, perpetua semper dignissima vita” (as bees in the flowery glades sip all the sweets, so we likewise feed on all thy golden words, thy words of gold, ever most worthy of life eternal).<sup>63</sup> The passage refers to the power of words or eloquence.

Thus Hercules who represents the king’s eloquence appears on the surface of the left

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<sup>63</sup> Carus Titus Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, trans. W. H. D. Rouse, 3rd ed., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1959) 3.11-13.

pedestal. As we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the two attributes of eloquence and virtue do not usually coexist in a Herculean representation. However the connection between eloquence and virtue is implied here. The years that had passed since the translation of Lucian by Erasmus who reintroduced eloquent Hercules in 1506, as discovered in Chapter 3, seemed to fuse the two eloquent and virtuous characteristics of Hercules into this engraving in 1653. We will consider this fusion at the end of the chapter.

Further chronological analysis of the emblem of a hive and bees on the surface of the right pedestal (Fig. 4.4) and its motto will reveal changes in the meaning of a ruler's mercy and governance. The emblem implies that the ruler's virtue in politics has altered with the times. Almost the same emblem of a hive and bees is seen also in Alciato's *Emblemata* (1621), known as Emblem 149, in which he mentions "Principis clementia (The mercy of the prince)" and comments upon the motto: "The fact that the king of the wasps never stings and that he is twice as big as the others proves a merciful rule and moderate kingship and sacred laws entrusted to good judges" (Fig. 4.5)<sup>64</sup>:



Fig. 4.5. "Principis clementia (The mercy of the prince)," Emblem 149, Padua, 1621.

<sup>64</sup> Peter M. Daly, Virginia W. Callahan and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: I, the Latin Emblems, Indexes and Lists* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) Emblem 149, Padua in 1621.

The motto concerns the king's rule over the people and "laws," and is appropriate to *Emblemata Regio Politica* for the education of a prince, but, interestingly, Alciato's other editions present rather different epigrams. For instance, in the edition published in Lyon, 1549, the following epigram with the same motto "The mercy of the prince" requests "kings" "to rule and to live without doing evil," and states, "See to it that the people are content enough to free you from any deceit whatever, and to exalt you with abundance."<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the 1551 edition published in Lyon had almost the same epigram though it was short: "The wise king of the wasps never wounds others; thus the prince should be just and merciful among his own people."<sup>66</sup>

However, a rather different epigram was given in the 1561 edition published in Paris: "That the king of wasps, though huge, does not sting and has no sting, signifies a lord who is kind to his people as to his friends, and sacred laws entrusted to good men."<sup>67</sup> The 1549 and 1551 editions emphasise only the king's clemency to his people, but in the 1561 edition, but the notion of law is added to the epigram. This addition is clarified in the epigram of the 1567 edition published in Frankfurt: "That the wasp king never stings with its sting and that his body is twice as large as the other wasps signifies a merciful rule and quiet kingdom in which all things are governed by law with which the good judge is familiar."<sup>68</sup> The word "people" was erased in the 1567 edition, and the rule of law was stressed. This Frankfurt 1567 edition was probably a source of the Latin edition in 1621 (Fig. 4.5), since the content and expression are almost the same. The point is that the chronological analysis of Alciato's Emblem 149 reflects a change in the meaning of a ruler's clemency: a

<sup>65</sup> Peter M. Daly and Simon Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) Emblem 149, Lyon in 1549.

<sup>66</sup> Daly and Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation*, Emblem 149, Lyon in 1551.

<sup>67</sup> Daly and Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation*, Emblem 149, Paris in 1561.

<sup>68</sup> Daly and Cuttler, eds., *Andreas Alciatus: 2, Emblems in Translation*, Emblem 149, Frankfurt in 1567.

transition toward a new, more practical and strategic politics based upon laws and Machiavellianism.

This shift is more clearly suggested in the picture of Hercules killing Hydra on the surface of the left pedestal. After we have finished analysing the symbols on the title page of Solórzano Pereira's *Emblemata Regio Politica*, it is easy to understand the importance of the representation of Hercules killing Hydra on the left pedestal (Fig. 4.6):



Fig. 4.6. “Domat omnia virtus (Virtue conquers all things),” from the Enlarged Part of Fig. 4.2

The motto “Domat omnia virtus (Virtue conquers all things)” is probably not seen in a specific Greek or Latin book, but Leonard Bruni, or Leonardo Aretino, a historian, humanist and a chancellor of Florence, wrote an epitaph titled “Herculis elogium” (Hercules’ epitaph) for Braccio Fortebraccio, or Braccio da Montone, the captain general of the papal forces, in 1424, referring to the same Latin motto: “Transivi intrepidus per mille pericula victor. / Non acies ferri, non clausis moenia portis, / Conatus tenere meos: *domat omnia virtus* (Fearless I passed, victor, through a thousand perils: neither ranks of iron nor walls with deep moats could contain my onslaught; virtue overcame all) (emphasis

added).”<sup>69</sup> Bruni compares Braccio to Hercules, and eulogises Braccio for overcoming his difficulties by virtue such as had Hercules in his twelve labours. This “virtue” connotes Herculean masculine strength and power, because Braccio was a hard-bitten general. Bruni was a little older than Machiavelli, and they seem to share the same implication of powerful “virtue.”

The combination of the motto and the representation of Hercules killing Hydra in Fig. 4.6 above is interesting to us because there is a possibility that the image suggests the conceptual change of “virtue” from Petrarch, Bruni, and Machiavelli. González de Zárate only explains that Felipe IV as Hercules “destroys the vices in Spain.”<sup>70</sup> However, if Hydra as a symbol of vice in this title page represents the violent multitude, tyrants, and enemies, it suggests that the taming of the multitude and the attack on tyrants and enemies with the powerful club of Hercules were essential for ruling the nation, just as the French Charles IX beat the Huguenots to death with the Herculean club in his memorial medal of St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre; and at least it could not be denied that the Herculean club symbolises masculine power. Therefore, also on the title page of Peter Isselburg’s *Emblemata Politica*, 1617, (Fig. 4.1), sturdy Hercules fighting the Hydra with his powerful club was depicted.

At the end of this chapter, let us summarise the discussion so far. Chapters 3 and 4 set out to answer the following question: “Why did the European monarchs like to compare themselves to Hercules?” Chapter 3 provided the first answer: it was because they

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<sup>69</sup> James Hankins, “The Latin Poetry of Leonardo Bruni,” *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, vol. 1, 2 vols., *Storia e letteratura* 220 (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003) 173-74. This English translation is by Hankins. See also Pieter Burman, *Anthologia Veterum Latinorum Epigrammatum Et Poëmatum, Sive Catalecta Poëtarum Latinorum: In VI. Libros Digesta* (Schoutenius, 1759) 21; John Colin Dunlop, *Selections from the Latin Anthology* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1838) 134-35.

<sup>70</sup> González de Zárate 32.

realised the importance of oratory in politics that they chose Hercules who symbolised eloquence. In Chapter 4, a second answer emerged: Hercules embodied virtue, therefore the European monarchs tried to have their subjects see them as the virtuous Hercules. However, this is too simple, because the notion of “virtue” had a variety of meanings in the Renaissance.

As Phyllis Rackin states, it is true that “Coriolanus’s exclusive devotion to the ideal of manly valor,” or virtue, which is “the noblest expression of Roman patriotism and manhood,” and lack of “maternal virtue of compassion” brought ruin on himself.<sup>71</sup> Rackin connects Coriolanus’s “virtue” with only “valor”; however, his “virtue” should not be limited to only “manly valor” because “valor” is just one of the virtues in the European and English Renaissance.

“Virtue” or “virtù” is a clue for unravelling Coriolanus’ tragic end. Aufidius analysed the reason for Coriolanus’ death as follows: “First he was / A noble servant to them [Romans], but could not / Carry his honours even. . . . [P]ride, . . . defect of judgement, . . . nature, / Not to be other than one thing, . . . made him feared, / So hated, and so banished” (4.7.35-48). And Aufidius says: “So our virtues / Lie in th’ interpretation of the time” (4.7.49-50). Here, Aufidius uses the word virtue in a positive and general sense, and points out that Coriolanus had great virtues and was a great servant to Rome but because his pride alienated the people they started to interpret his virtues as vices. However, we can also apply this idea historically. Since Machiavelli changed the idea of virtue from the political point of view, we could argue that Coriolanus ought to have tried to dominate Rome through a new political kind of virtue instead of putting the emphasis on

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<sup>71</sup> Phyllis Rackin, “*Coriolanus*: Shakespeare’s Anatomy of ‘Virtus’,” *Modern Language Studies* 13.2 (1983) 72, 73, 75.

his more old fashioned values of manly force. As Aufidius suggests, we have to examine the concept “virtue” in the context of European Renaissance political thought. The notion had drastically changed during the Renaissance by Machiavelli’s works. Coriolanus should have dominated Rome by the Machiavellian real-politik “virtù,” but he did not. He attempted to control Rome only by the traditional and anachronistic “manly valor.”

Machiavelli stresses the importance of pacifying the multitude when princes rule their countries; and he suggests in *The Prince* that only princes who can optimise their “virtù” over the Hydra-like multitude can succeed in governance. Virtue had been frequently associated with Hercules, but Ciceronian and Xenophontean virtue had gradually changed to a more realpolitik masculine “virtù,” which was also a weapon to fight against the Goddess Fortune. As the result of the introduction of the new “virtù,” strategic representations of Hercules started to appear in many political texts and images. In short, the connection or association of the multitude, princes, Hercules, Fortune, and virtue or “virtù” was extremely strong; and it is no exaggeration to say that the virtuous Hercules played a fundamental role in the history of European political thought.

Here, we need to remember our discussion on the eloquent Hercules in Chapter 3. Renaissance Humanists like Lorenzo Valla who called “oratory” “the queen of things” had traditionally given good or virtuous attributes to eloquence.<sup>72</sup> However, we have to consider that there might be also an evil aspect of eloquence. If, as this chapter has argued, “virtue” itself drastically changed in the Renaissance, was there a possibility that the concept “eloquence” also changed?

Mercury, a god of eloquence, was described as a representation with many heads,

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<sup>72</sup> See the note 22 of Chapter 3.

which signified many qualities of Mercury as the god of commerce, invention, cunning, and theft; and Mercury is also a symbol of uncertain or sceptical arts (Fig. 4.7).

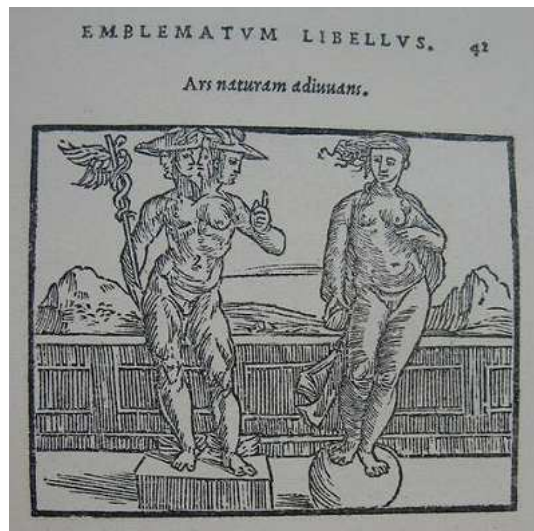


Fig. 4.7. “Mercury and Fortune,” Woodcut Known as Emblem 99 in Andrea Alciato, *Emblematum Libellus*, Venice, 1546.<sup>73</sup>

Natale Conti describes Mercury in his *Mythologiae* (1567) as follows:

For when they wanted to show us the incredible power of eloquence and rhetoric, they said that Mercury was the messenger of both men and gods. But rhetoric for them explained the will of the gods, the meaning of divine laws, and good moral counsel, all of which have God as their sole source. Thus even men’s ears were fastened to Mercury’s golden chain, so that he could drag them around wherever he pleased.<sup>74</sup>

However, Conti does not forget to add: “They also claimed that Mercury was the god of robbers, impostors, and cheats, not only because an evil, shameful type of eloquence poses a real problem for the rest of men, but also because those whose horoscope is controlled by Mercury are disposed to be thieves and con artists” (1.370). “Mercury is Janus-faced in his outward appearance, because he is fused with Hercules Gallicus, but also in his moral

<sup>73</sup> See Fig. 1.9 in Chapter 1.

<sup>74</sup> Natale Conti, *Natale Conti’s Mythologiae*, trans. John Mulryan and Steven Brown, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 316, 2 vols. (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006) 1.369-70.





We concluded at the end of Chapter 3 that the Mercurial or Herculean French king ruled over the fickle multitude by eloquence, but this woodcut might have suggested that not only “virtuous” eloquence but also “*virtuous*” eloquence with cunning and deceit, whose significance Machiavelli explored in his works, was needed to govern the people. Although we stated at the beginning of Chapter 3 that the two Herculean qualities, “eloquence” and “virtue,” usually appear separately in both Renaissance texts and images, and rarely coexist in a Herculean image, after Machiavelli both the concepts change, and a conceptual blending of “eloquence” and “virtue” seems to be acknowledged in the hybrid image of the oratorical Gallic Hercules who are derived from virtuous Hercules.

At the beginning of this chapter, we raised another question: what does Cominius really intend in *Coriolanus* when he praises Coriolanus’ “valour” and “virtue” as those of a demigod: if “valour is the chiefest virtue,” “The man I speak of cannot in the world / Be singly counterpoised” (2.2.84-87). Cominius says, “valour is the chiefest virtue,” but valour is not all of virtue: indeed Coriolanus is full of valour, but he is not virtuous in a Machiavellian sense. Machiavellian “*virtù*” is sometimes equivalent to crafty power. However, the virtuous Herculean Coriolanus was too simple-minded, too sincere in his words and actions; as Menenius puts it: “His heart’s his mouth” (3.1.257). Coriolanus should have used “*virtù*” and evil “eloquence” to tame the vicious Hydra-headed Roman plebeians, since he identified himself with Hercules. Yet he did not use this strategic power. The cause of his tragedy is that he lacked “*virtù*” and cunning “eloquence” even if he was Herculean. In other words, Coriolanus’ virtue was not that of Renaissance realpolitik but a Medieval and moralistic virtue. The tragedy of Coriolanus arose from this anachronistic virtue.

## Chapter 5

### The Hydra-Like Changing Self

In this chapter we take our final steps in clarifying the role of Hercules-Hydra in *Coriolanus*.

This chapter shifts the focus from the questions of the eloquent and virtuous Herculean figures discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 to Hydra images in the late Renaissance and

Reformation. Hydra is the focus here because we have to illuminate the reason why Shakespeare transformed Coriolanus from Hercules into a furious Hydra in the play.

After the investigation, we shall discover that Coriolanus' tragedy arose from this transformation just as our discussions on the eloquent and virtuous Hercules have elucidated the causes of his tragic end. As we discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, in order to avoid his death Coriolanus should have used "virtù" and cunning "eloquence" and been a Machiavellian politician. Shakespeare provides an example of the actor-politician in 3 *Henry VI*, and compares Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, later to become King Richard III, to "Machiavel" or Machiavelli:

Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,  
And cry "Content" to that which grieves my heart,  
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,  
And frame my face to all occasions.

.....  
I can add colours to the *chameleon*,  
Change shapes with *Proteus* for advantages,  
And set the murderous *Machiavel* to school.  
Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?

(3 *Henry VI*, 3.3.182-94: emphasis added)

Richard, who is hypocrisy incarnate, refers to chameleon and Proteus to be proud of his Machiavellian transformative ability. Richard got the throne “with artificial” acting or Machiavellian flexible self, but Coriolanus lacked this flexibility. As we will argue in this chapter, Chameleon, Proteus, and Hydra were symbols of flexible identity in the late Renaissance and Reformation; and by exploring these symbols we will discover the reason why Coriolanus as a Hydra has to die at the end of the play.

Chapter 5 adopts the following procedure. First, we trace the process of Coriolanus’ transformation in the play; next, in order to substantiate his identity change into a many-headed monster, we explore Shakespeare’s usage of the Hydra-like self in *Henry V* where Prince Hal’s character is described as being “Hydra-headed wilfulness” (1.1.36). Through the investigation of Prince Hal’s transformative Hydra-like identity, which is a fundamental characteristic of a post-Machiavellian actor-politician, audiences are urged to illuminate the concept “change” itself in the Renaissance which glorified rebirth or changing into something new. Renaissance thinkers liked to discuss predetermination and “free will,” or changeable identity of human beings; and Hydra which represented the transformative self in the Renaissance context appears in a religious controversy on free will between Luther and Erasmus. Hydra was a symbol of changeability in the Renaissance, and the transformation of Coriolanus reflects this Renaissance symbolism which is summarised in Erasmus’ adage:

Magis varius quam hydra (As variable as the hydra).<sup>1</sup>

We saw that the image of the fickle multitude as many-headed is based upon this adage, but the adage can also be applied to the changing self or identity as if it too were a Hydra—and,

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<sup>1</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, I i 1 to I v 100*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips and R.A.B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 137, I i 95.

as we will see, it was so based. The controversy about free will between Erasmus and Luther is expressed in many woodcuts which gave supplementary explanations of their argument. In later sections of the chapter, we will analyse one of the woodcuts which depicts seven-headed Luther as an example of a changing self similar to a multiplied Hydra, and examine the wider background in the positive Renaissance appraisal of “change” through the proverbs on Hydra, polyp, and chameleon which Erasmus collected in his *Adages* as symbols of changeability. Finally, we will investigate a woodcut of Luther as “Hercules Germanicus” by the same Holbein who portrayed a smiling Herculean Erasmus. Why was Luther seen as both Hercules and Hydra? After this mystery has been unravelled, the reason why Shakespeare transforms Coriolanus from Hercules into Hydra will become clearer.

First, let us explore how Coriolanus changes himself from Hercules to Hydra over the course of the play. As we have discussed, Hydra represents the fickle Roman citizens in *Coriolanus*, and the many-headed monster is an enemy to be controlled by the Herculean Coriolanus. However, this power relationship is reversed by the banishment of Coriolanus from Rome: from a Roman point of view, the rebellious Coriolanus consequently turns to be a monstrous dragon or Hydra to be subdued by Rome. This transformation is actually suggested in the text. After Coriolanus is condemned to banishment, he speaks to his mother:

Believe't not lightly—though I go alone,  
 Like to *a lonely dragon that his fen*  
*Makes feared* and talked of more than seen, your son  
 Will or exceed the common or be caught  
 With cautelous baits and practice. (4.1.30-34: emphasis added)

A keyword which makes it possible to connect the dragon with Hydra is “fen.” For

example, Edward Topsell, early natural historian and Church of England clergyman, described the monster under the heading “Of the HYDRA, supposed to be killed by Hercules” as follows: “this [slaying the monster] was done in the fenne of Lerna, therefore there grew a Proverb of *Lerna malorum*, to signifie a multitude of unresistable evils.”<sup>2</sup> Edmund Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* also mentions a “monstrous beast ybredd in filthy *fen*” (1.7.16.8: emphasis added); and the beast is compared to the Hydra as follows:

Such one it was, as that renowned Snake  
Which great *Alcides* in *Stremona* slew,  
Long fostred in the filth of *Lerna* lake,  
Whose many heades out budding euer new,  
Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew: (1.7.17.1-5).<sup>3</sup>

As Horace Howard Furness annotates the phrase “a lonely dragon,” “Shakespeare was probably thinking of the Hydra of the Lernaean marsh to which reference has been made before in this play.”<sup>4</sup>

Coriolanus again transforms himself from the “lonely dragon” into a different type of dragon later in the play. Aufidius depicts Coriolanus as a furious dragon at the battle between Rome and the Volsci: Coriolanus “shows good husbandry for the Volscian state, / Fights *dragon-like*, and does achieve as soon / As draw his sword” (4.7.23-25: emphasis added). Sicinius also voices his astonishment at the dramatic change of Coriolanus into the dragon: “Is’t possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?” (5.4.9-10); and Menenius replies to Sicinius: “*This Martius [Coriolanus] is grown from man to dragon*. He has *wings*, he’s more than a creeping thing” (5.4.12-14: emphasis added). In brief,

<sup>2</sup> Edward Topsell, *The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and Insects*, ed. Willy Ley, vol. 2, 3 vols. (London: Frank Cass, 1967) 735.

<sup>3</sup> A. C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita and Toshiyuki Suzuki, eds., *The Faerie Queene*, by Edmund Spenser, Longman Annotated English Poets, rev. 2nd. ed. (Harlow, England: Pearson Education, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Horace Howard Furness, ed., *The Tragedie of Coriolanus*, by William Shakespeare, A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1928) 403.

Coriolanus transforms himself from “man” into the dragon in the fen, and then the dragon with “wings.”

In order to investigate why Shakespeare transformed Coriolanus from Hercules into Hydra over the course of the play, we need to examine further the implication of the winged dragon. The winged dragon is, as we have argued in Chapter 2, a reminiscence of the seven-headed beast of Revelation: “And there appeared another wonder in heaven: for behold, a great red dragon having seven heades, and ten hornes, and seven crownes upon his heads” (Rev. 12.3).<sup>5</sup> Even if Coriolanus has only one head, the dragon living in the fen, as we discussed with reference to Edmund Spenser in Chapter 2, can be identified with the Hydra, and the winged dragon corresponds to the seven-headed dragon in Revelation. In fact, these two representations were frequently confused in the Renaissance.<sup>6</sup> Shakespeareans, strangely, have not paid attention to the figurative metamorphosis of Coriolanus. However, what does the Hydra representation itself mean in Coriolanus? In order to make this investigation in thorough terms, first we must explore Shakespeare’s general usage of the Hydra-like self in another play.

An example of the transforming self, likened to a proliferative Hydra, is seen in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, in lines spoken by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He points out that young Prince Hal led a riotous life, but his lifestyle radically improved on his ascent to the throne:

The courses of his youth promised it not.  
The breath no sooner left his father’s body,  
But that his wildness, mortified in him,  
Seemed to die too; yea, at that very moment

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<sup>5</sup> Lloyd E. Berry, ed., *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 2.

Consideration, like an angel, came  
 And whipped the offending Adam out of him,  
 Leaving his body as a paradise,  
 To envelop and contain celestial spirits.  
 Never was such a sudden scholar made;  
 Never came reformation in a *flood*,  
 With such a heady currance, scouring faults  
 Nor never *Hydra-headed* wilfulness  
 So soon did lose his seat and all at once  
 As in this king. (*Henry V*, 1.1.25-38: emphasis added)

As many scholars comment, the italicised word “flood” probably alludes to the cleansing of the Augean stables by Hercules, who diverted a river through them, rather than to Noah’s flood.<sup>7</sup> As Hercules cleaned the Augean stables, a symbol of vice, so Henry V purged his evil mind.<sup>8</sup>

Then, how does the Archbishop of Canterbury intend to describe Hal’s personality in the phrase “Hydra-headed wilfulness”?; and what does the collocation of “Hydra-headed” with “wilfulness” signify? Editors and lexicographers have annotated the word “Hydra-headed” as follows: “manifold and persistent”; “manifold and proliferating”; “not to be killed, like the heads of the Lernaean Hydra”; “difficult to kill the many-headed snake of Lerna whose heads grew as fast as they were cut off.”<sup>9</sup> Among these annotations, Gary

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Gurr, ed., *King Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, rep. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Gary Taylor, ed., *Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The Oxford Shakespeare, rep. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). See also J. H. Walter, ed., *King Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare, 2nd Series (London: Methuen, 1954); T. W. Craik, ed., *King Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd Series (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Ovid, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation, 1567*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000) 9.229; Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. James George Frazer, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1961) 2.5.5; Siculus Diodorus, Diodorus of Sicily, trans. C. H. Oldfather, rep. ed., The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 2, 12 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) 4.13.3; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod, The Loeb Classical Library, 5 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1918-35) 5.1.9-10.

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, ed., *Henry V* 1.1.36; A. R. Humphreys, ed., *Henry V*, by William Shakespeare, The New Penguin Shakespeare (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968) 1.1.35; Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary: A Complete Dictionary of All the English Words, Phrases, and Constructions in the Works of the Poet*, ed. Gregor Sarrazin, 2 vols. (New York: Dover Publications, 1971); C. T. Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary*, ed. Robert D. Eagleson, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).



Taylor's is the most inclusive; the word probably signifies both Hydra's obstinacy and its many heads. Nevertheless, even his annotation leaves unclear what Hydra represents in this context.

We propose the hypothesis that the many-headed Hydra represents Hal's many heads or, in context, many faces. Indeed, Hal does have many faces: one face in the court; another face in the tavern with Falstaff and his companions. Hal changes his face to suit his needs. He is a master of disguise, which can certainly be understood as requiring many faces or heads—like a Hydra. First, Hal and Poins disguise themselves in the scene of the highway near Gad's Hill, and Falstaff cannot detect Hal's identity: this indicates that Hal has the advantage over Falstaff in acting. At the tavern Hal extemporaneously and successfully plays the role of Henry IV; Hal and Poins again disguise themselves as drawers in *Part 2*, and Hal shouts and mimics a stock phrase of Francis, the drawer, "Anon, anon, sir" (2 *Henry IV*, 2.4.285). Hal's acting is presented as perfect because his disguises as a drawer and a highwayman escape recognition. After his coronation ceremony, Hal says of his kingship: "This new and gorgeous garment, majesty, / Sits not so easy on me as you think" (2 *Henry IV*, 5.2.44-45), denying that sovereignty can easily be put on and taken off as the metaphor of the garment suggests that it can: for Hal, to be king is to play a role. Again in *Henry V*, he goes around his camp in disguise in an attempt to discover the soldiers' real attitudes (4.1).

Hal is not only accomplished at disguise, but also is never deceived by other characters in the three plays. Falstaff's companions quickly get drunk, but Hal never does; and as shown in his remark, "Well, thus we play the fools with the time, and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us" (2 *Henry IV*, 2.2.133-35), he has a point of

view from which he can grasp his situation objectively. Hal's consummate acting is one of his supreme talents as a politician. This characteristic of Hal's is expressed decidedly in the following citation:

I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight. (*1 Henry IV*, 2.5.93-96)

Hal absorbs various things from other characters every time he meets them, and he masters their roles. All types of persons live in him: Hotspur as an ideal soldier; his father, Henry IV, as a perfect model of a politician; and Falstaff as the "tutor and the feeder of my riots" (*2 Henry IV*, 5.5.62). This line spoken by Henry V is worthy of note. Falstaff's tutorial induces Hal's "riots," and it could be said that Hal's "riots" against his father and country were like a "Hydra-headed" monster as the Archbishop of Canterbury named Hal's inner rebellion. Hal's variable identity is, in this sense, correlated with the proliferative Hydra. The phrase "Hydra-headed wilfulness" is a synthesis of Hal's theatrical and changing identity. Moreover, his Hydra-like stubbornness has defied his father, Henry IV, and the court. The reason why the Archbishop of Canterbury praises Hal in this scene is that Hal was able to rid himself of his Hydra-like vicious self. The theatrically changing identity of Hal was a target to be subdued just as Hercules cleansed the Augean stables. To act is to change self and the world. There is no doubt that the "Hydra-headed" Prince Hal who finally betrayed Falstaff was a good actor, and at the same time as the Hydra illustrates, Shakespeare creates the image of Hydra as a mixture of stubbornness and performance of Hal in *Henry IV*, and uses it again in *Coriolanus*.

We have analysed Hal's character, but in order to fully understand Hal's and Coriolanus' changing identity, we need to direct our eyes to the concepts of "change" and

“free will” because to analyse these concepts is a key in our comprehension of Coriolanus. In Italy as in England, people wondered whether a human being is possessed of a changeable existence or is his existence predetermined. This fundamental question is closely connected with the changeable identity of human beings and the status of “free will.” Representations of Hydra touch on these issues as they appear in the religious controversy on free will between Luther and Erasmus. As Paul Oskar Kristeller puts it, the “favorite topics” of the Renaissance Humanists are “virtues, vices,” “the dignity of man. . . and the relation between fortune, fate, and free will” and both Luther and Erasmus used the Hydra image to explore this.<sup>10</sup>

Let us turn to a woodcut which explains the argument on flexible self and free will in the Reformation because, as it suggests, the “Hydra-headed” self is closely connected with the Reformation in addition to Humanism. In the woodcut Luther is presented as the Hydra-like seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse and criticised his changing identity. The seven heads represent roles assigned to Luther, and each head burlesques his social image, which was widely circulated by various portraits: each of the seven heads expresses a different face of Luther. The woodcut was produced by the Catholic Church as a criticism of the performance of the transformative Luther.

Johannes Cochlaeus, who had been an adherent of Luther but had re-converted to Catholicism, issued an abusive pamphlet against Luther in German as well as in Latin in

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<sup>10</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance*, rep. ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966) 156. See also Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963) 4: “philosophy in the Quattrocento. . . is concentrated in the three great problems: God, freedom, and immortality”; Charles Trinkaus, “The Problem of Free Will in the Renaissance and the Reformation,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 10.1 (1949) 51-62. This essay is reproduced in Paul Oskar Kristeller and Philip P. Wiener, eds., *Renaissance Essays: From the Journal of the History of Ideas*, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper & Row, 1968) 187-98; Charles Edward Trinkaus, “The Problem of Free Will in the Renaissance and the Reformation,” *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983) 263-73.

1529.<sup>11</sup> The purpose of the pamphlet entitled *Septiceps Lutherus* (*The Seven-Headed Luther*) was to denounce Luther's multiformity, and it had a woodcut engraved by Hans Brosamer (Fig. 5.1):



Fig. 5.1. *Septiceps Lutherus* (*The Seven-Headed Luther*), Engraved by Hans Brosamer, 1529.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Ralph Keen, "Johannes Cochlaeus: An Introduction to His Life and Work," *Luther's Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther*, eds. Elizabeth Vandiver, Ralph Keen and Thomas D. Frazel (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) 40-52. Irena Backus, *Life Writing in Reformation Europe: Lives of Reformers by Friends, Disciples and Foes*, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) 230: "Cochlaeus, whose work was a history of the Reformation as well as an extremely negative biography of Luther, served as the basic source for all the later hostile biographers."

<sup>12</sup> Johannes Cochlaeus, *Septiceps Lutherus: vbiq[ue] sibi, suis scriptis, contrariis, in Visitatione[m] Saxonica[m], per D. D. Joan. Cochlaeum, aeditus* (Lypsiae: Schumann, 1529) title page. The courtesy of die Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek.

<<http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10167332-0>> See also

Here Luther is compared to the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse. Each head burlesques one of his social images.<sup>13</sup> The head on his right shoulder is that of a doctor with a doctor's cap. The second head labelled "Martin" in his monk's habit satirises St. Martin as a Catholic saint. The turban of the third head sees Luther a Turk, an infidel. The head in the centre labelled "Ecclesiast" with a biretta or a square cap worn by Roman Catholic priests satirically points out that before his apostasy Luther was a Catholic priest of the St. Augustinian Hermits. The fifth head probably signifies a fanatic whose hair stands on end; and many hornets, which are considered synonymous with anger and fear in the Bible, swarm around the head. The sixth head travesties the Church Visitor; Luther revived the system of Church Visitation which had been neglected, drawing the accusation that he conceived himself to be a new pope. The seventh head is that of Barabbas, the robber released by Pilate instead of Christ, suggesting that Luther was an agitator or rabble-rouser. Finally, the man with the seven heads holds a book which is probably the Bible, reflecting Luther's motto, "Sola scriptura (by scripture alone)": the seven-headed Luther follows instructions from the Bible to play these assigned roles.<sup>14</sup> This monstrous

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R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, new paperback ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 233, 305.

<sup>13</sup> Approximately five hundred portraits of Luther are left. The complete list of the portraits is in Johannes Ficker, "Die Bildnisse Luthers aus der Zeit seines Lebens," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 16 (1934) 103-61.

<sup>14</sup> Gerhard Bott, *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland: Ausstellung zum 500. Geburtstag Martin Luthers veranstaltet vom Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Verein für Reformationsgeschichte*, Kataloge des Germanischen Nationalmuseums (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1983) 227-28; Gerhard Bott, Gerhard Ebeling and Bernd Moeller, eds., *Martin Luther: Sein Leben in Bildern und Texten* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1983) 209; Martin Warnke, *Cranachs Luther: Entwürfe für ein Image*, Kunststück (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1984) 51-52; Werner Hofmann, ed., *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst: Hamburger Kunsthalle, 11. November 1983-8. Januar 1984* (München: Prestel-Verlag, 1983) 122, 16-61; Peter Newman Brooks, *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary, 1483-1983*, rep. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 3-4; Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints 1490-1550* (London: British Museum Press, 1995) 178-79; Peter Burschel, "Das Monster: Katholische Luther-Imagination im 16. Jahrhundert," *Luther zwischen den Kulturen*, eds. Hans Medick and Peer Schmidt (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004) 33-48; Roland Belgrave, Vega Castro, Caroline Donnellan and Ute Kuhlemann, *Prints as Propaganda: The German Reformation*, Catalogue Published on Occasion of the Exhibition Held in the Strang Print Room, University College London, 5 May-11 June, 1999 (London:

representation of Luther is substantiated by a letter of Cardinal Vergerio who visited the excommunicated Luther in Wittenberg; Vergerio calls Luther a “monster,” though the epithet “many-headed” did not modify the noun.<sup>15</sup>

Another possible interpretation is that the many heads explain irritation at the rapid spread of Protestantism. When Geronimo [Girolamo] Cardano or Hieronymus Cardanus in Latin, who was known as an Italian astrologist, physician, and mathematician, commented on a horoscope of Luther’s birth in 1543, he compared the rapidly increasing numbers of Protestants to a countless-headed monster. Cardano thought that the spread of Protestantism was influenced by the horoscope:

It is therefore incredible how much that belief has grown in a short time: for it has bound most of Germany, all of England, and many other regions, while he still lives, and no province is free of his followers except Spain. The world is in ferment with this man’s schism, which, because he has Mars and the Dragon’s Tail mixed in, fragments itself of its own accord and grows *countless heads* (emphasis added).<sup>16</sup>

The “Dragon” or Draco in Latin is the name of a constellation, and in Greek mythology the Dragon named Ladon with one hundred heads guarded the golden apples of the Hesperides, which were stolen by Hercules in the eleventh of the Twelve Labours.<sup>17</sup> However, the

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The History of Art Department, University College London, 1999) 82-83; Ilonka van Gülpen, *Der deutsche Humanismus und die frühe Reformations-Propaganda 1520-1526: Das Lutherporträt im Dienst der Bildpublizistik*, *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte* 144 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002) 358-59; R. Po-chia Hsia, “A Time for Monsters: Monstrous Births, Propaganda, and the German Reformation,” *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004) 67-92; Jennifer Spinks, “Reformation Visual Culture and Monstrous Births: Luther’s Monk Calf and Melanchthon’s Papal Ass,” *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, *Religious Cultures in the Early Modern World* 5 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009) 74-76; Scribner 232-34.

<sup>15</sup> Aby Warburg, “Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther (1920),” trans. David Britt, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, Texts & Documents (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999) 625-27; in the original German text, Aby Warburg, “Heidnisch-antike Weissagung in Wort und Bild zu Luthers Zeiten (1920),” *Gesammelte Schriften*, eds. Fritz Rougemont and Gertrud Bing, rep. ed. (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1969) 517.

<sup>16</sup> Warburg 659-60; in the original German text, 543.

<sup>17</sup> Aristophanes, *The Frogs*, trans. Benjamin Bickley Rogers, *Aristophanes: The Peace; The Birds; The Frogs*, 1924, rep. ed., vol. 2, 3 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Hinemann, 1979)

Dragon probably signifies also both the dragon of the Apocalypse and the Hydra which “grows countless heads” because Ladon’s heads do not grow.

Without loss of time, a Protestant dissenter issued a woodcut against *The Seven-Headed Luther* titled *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal* in 1530 (Fig. 5.2):

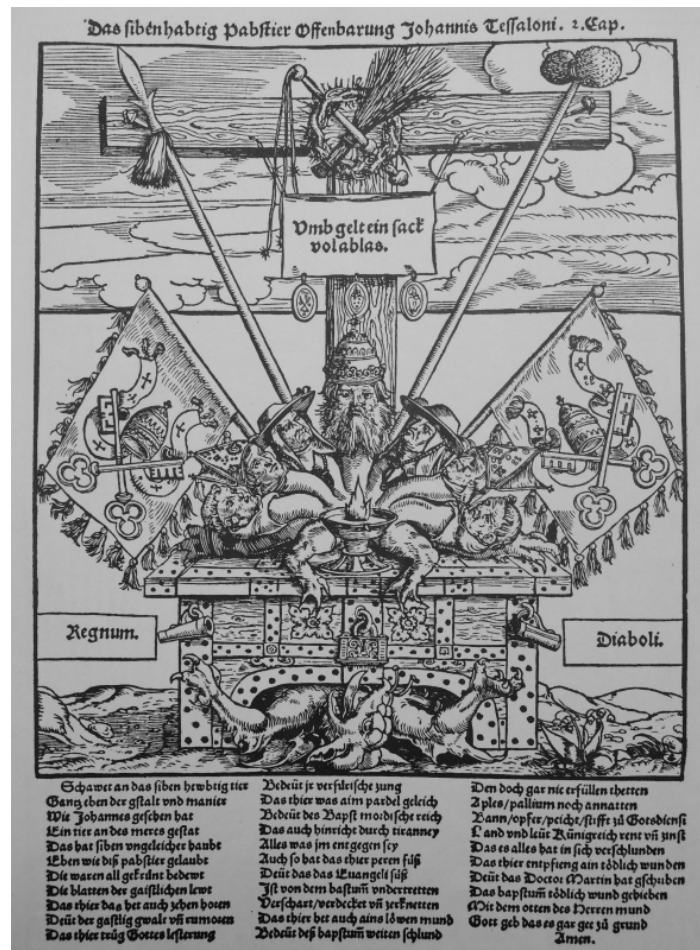


Fig. 5.2. *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal*, Engraved by an Unidentified Artist, Berlin, c. 1530.<sup>18</sup>

This Papal monster with the seven heads is placed on a cashbox, which denotes an altar, to safekeep the proceeds of the sale of indulgences, and the monster has two hands which

465-78; Aristophanes, *The Frogs of Aristophanes*, trans. Benjamin Bickley Rogers, 2nd. ed. (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1919) 465-78; Apollodorus 2.5.11; Ovid 4.776-814; Diodorus 4.26.2-4. See also, Daniel Ogden, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 33-40; Daniel Ogden, *Dragons, Serpents, and Slayers in the Classical and Early Christian Worlds: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) 57-62.

<sup>18</sup> Max Geisberg and Walter L. Strauss, eds., *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550-1600*, revised ed., 4 vols. (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1974) 1530.

represent the arms of Christ nailed on the cross. The two hands, however, are replaced with the spear and rod with sponge as the instruments of the Passion, which also include the crown of thorns, the nails, and the scourges. An indulgence letter with the motto, “For cash a sack of indulgences,” hangs from the cross. The Emblem of the Papacy with the “triregnum” called the “tiara” or “triple crown” and St. Peter’s keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are depicted on the two flags. The title “Regnum Diaboli” at the side of the chest means “the kingdom of the Devil,” which is described beneath the chest. The seven heads represent the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church: the head in the centre is that of the pope, and on both sides are the heads of two cardinals, two bishops and two monks.<sup>19</sup>

Common to *The Seven-Headed Luther* and *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal* is the many-headed figure. If *The Seven-Headed Luther* delivered by the Catholic side is a severe attack on the multiple personality of Luther, the Protestant counterattack against the corruption of Papacy shows that the Protestant dissenter did not grasp this satirical intention of Johannes Cochlaeus. The anti-Luther woodcut focused on the contradictory nature of Luther’s beliefs: although Luther thinks a stable identity is significant in faith, his identity is separated into various parts.<sup>20</sup> Luther does not accept free will, but Luther himself, the Catholic rebutter thinks, seems to make his own decisions about what to do without being controlled by God or fate.<sup>21</sup>

Free will or the power to act of one’s own accord was a central topic of theological discussion between Luther and Erasmus, who would no doubt regard Luther as “Magis

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<sup>19</sup> Bott, *Martin Luther* 234-35; Hofmann, ed., *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst* 162; Warnke 52-53; Scribner 100-02.

<sup>20</sup> Gotthelf Wiedermann, “Cochlaeus as a Polemicist,” *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary, 1483-1983*, ed. Peter Newman Brooks, rep. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) 196-97.

<sup>21</sup> Warnke 51, 53.



varius quam hydra (As variable as the hydra).’’<sup>22</sup> The representation of Hydra which signifies many faces or identities expressed in the description of Prince Hal can shed light on their theological discussion on free will. By summarising the discussion, we can understand the implications hidden in *The Seven-Headed Luther* and *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal*.

In his *De servo arbitrio* (*On the Bondage of the Will*), which intended to refute Erasmus’ *De libero arbitrio*, Luther starts by citing Erasmus’ definition of free will:

Now first we will begin quite properly with the definition you give of free choice, where you say: “By free choice in this place we mean a power of the human will by which a man can apply himself to the things which lead to eternal salvation, or turn away from them.”<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, Luther paraphrases the definition of Erasmus in another place:

On the authority of Erasmus, then, free choice is a power of the will that is able of itself to will and unwill the word and work of God, by which it is led to those things which exceed both its grasp and its perception.<sup>24</sup>

Luther, however, rejects the freedom of the will:

Here, then, is something fundamentally necessary and salutary for a Christian, to know that God foreknows nothing contingently, but that he foresees and purposes and does all things by his immutable, eternal, and infallible will. Here is a thunderbolt by which free choice is completely prostrated and shattered, so that those who want free choice asserted must either deny or explain away this thunderbolt, or get rid of it by some other means. . . . From this it follows irrefutably that everything we do, everything that happens, even if it seems to us to happen mutably and contingently, happens in fact nonetheless necessarily and immutably, if you have regard to the will of God.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Erasmus, *Adages* I i 95.

<sup>23</sup> Martin Luther, *De servo arbitrio*, trans. Philip S. Watson, *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*, Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio*, Luther, *De servo arbitrio*, The Library of Christian Classics 17 (London: SCM Press, 1969) 169-70.

<sup>24</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 173.

<sup>25</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 118-19. Luther’s theological “determinism” is complemented by his rejection of Astrology. See, Warburg 655; in the original German essay, 540.

Luther, furthermore, advances his opinion by using a metaphor of pottery:

With this the doctrine is proved, that the vessels do not prepare themselves, but the master prepares them. This is the meaning also in Rom., ch. 9, where the potter has power over the clay, etc. Thus Paul's simile stands unshaken as a most effective demonstration that freedom of choice is as nothing in the sight of God.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, Luther summarises the difference between himself and Erasmus, whose opinion,

Luther says, is "madness":

Just listen to your inferences: Scripture commends the grace of God, therefore it proves free choice; it commends the help of the grace of God, therefore it establishes free choice. By what sort of logic did you learn to draw these conclusions? Why not the contrary: Grace is preached, therefore free choice is abolished; the help of grace is commended, therefore free choice is destroyed?<sup>27</sup>

Luther states clearly that "free choice is completely prostrated and shattered" and "freedom of choice is. . . nothing in the sight of God." Nevertheless, he seemed to have many faces and made his own decisions freely as if he accepted free will. This contradiction aroused the indignation of the Catholic who published the seven-headed Luther woodcut.

By coincidence the Hydra as a symbol of variableness is again a key to understand how Erasmus, the Catholic Humanist, arrived at his idea of free will. Before investigating further the reason why Cochlaeus criticised Luther who changed his faces or played many

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<sup>26</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 257. Rom. 9:19-21: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

<sup>27</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 290. For the debate between Erasmus and Luther, see also, Peter Macardle, Clarence H. Miller and Charles Trinkaus, eds., Introduction, *A Discussion of Free Will, De libero arbitrio, Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 76 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) xi-cvi; Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther*, Harvard Historical Monographs 71 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); James Tracy, "Two Erasmuses, Two Luthers: Erasmus' Strategy in Defence of *De Libero Arbitrio*," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 78 (1987) 37-60; E. Gordon Rupp, and others, ed., *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation, Erasmus, De libero arbitrio, Luther, De servo arbitrio*, by Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther, The Library of Christian Classics 17 (London: SCM Press, 1969) 1-32.

different roles expressed in the seven-headed woodcut, we need to know the root of Erasmus' views of free will. Erasmus included two proverbs concerning "change" and "transformation" in his *Adages*: "Magis varius quam hydra" and "Polypi mentem obtine (Adopt the outlook of the polyp [cephalopod, or squid and octopus])."<sup>28</sup> The fusion between Christianity and paganism in which *Adages* consists is characteristic of his "philosophy of Christ."<sup>29</sup> Erasmus says:

what else is the philosophy of Christ, which He himself calls *a rebirth*, than *the restoration of human nature* originally well formed? By the same token, although no one has taught this more perfectly and more effectively than Christ, nevertheless one may find in the books of the pagans very much which does agree with His teaching (emphasis added).<sup>30</sup>

This Erasmian philosophy of Christ takes up an assertion of Francesco Petrarch, father of Humanism:<sup>31</sup>

Indeed the true wisdom of God is Christ so that in order to philosophize rightly we must first love and cherish Him. Let us be such in all things that above all things we may be Christians. Let us thus read philosophical, poetic, or historical writings so that the Gospel of Christ resounds always in the ear of

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<sup>28</sup> Erasmus, *Adages* I i 93,

<sup>29</sup> Eugene F. Rice, Jr. discusses "a new synthesis of the Christian and antique" in Erasmus' early works in his Eugene F. Rice, Jr., "Erasmus and the Religious Tradition, 1495-1499," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 11.4 (1950) 387, 404-11. This paper is reproduced in Kristeller and Wiener, eds., *Renaissance Essays* 162-86. See also, Brendan Bradshaw, "The Christian Humanism of Erasmus," *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 33 (1982) 411-47. For Erasmus' "philosophy of Christ," see James D. Tracy, *Erasmus of the Low Countries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) 104-11; Cornelis Augustijn, *Erasmus: His Life, Works, and Influence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 71-88.

<sup>30</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Paraclesis*, trans. John C. Olin, *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Selected Writings of Erasmus, with the Life of Erasmus by Beatus Rhenanus* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1975) 100.

<sup>31</sup> Charles Trinkaus, "The Religious Thought of the Italian Humanists and the Reformers: Anticipation or Autonomy?," *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, eds. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman, *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought* 10 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974) 352. For Petrarch as the father of Humanism, see Ernst Cassirer, Francis R. Johnson, Paul Oskar Kristeller, Dean P. Lockwood and Lynn Thorndike, "Some Remarks on the Question of the Originality of the Renaissance," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 4.1 (1943) 49-74; James Harvey Robinson and Henry Winchester Rolfe, eds., *Petrarch the First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters: A Selection from His Correspondence with Boccaccio and other Friends, Designed to Illustrate the Beginnings of the Renaissance. Translated from the Original Latin, together with Historical Introductions and Notes* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898) 225-93; Ronald G. Witt, "Petrarch, Father of Humanism?," *"In the Footsteps of the Ancients": The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*, *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought* 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2000) 230-91.

our heart. With it alone are we sufficiently happy and learned; without it no matter how much we learn we become more ignorant and more wretched. To it all things must be referred as if to the loftiest stronghold of the truth; on it as if on a single immovable foundation of literary truths, human labor can safely build.<sup>32</sup>

Both Erasmus and Petrarch placed great importance on “rebirth” and “change.” As

Erasmus puts it, “all can be Christian, all can be devout, and—I shall boldly add—all can be theologians” by “a rebirth (renascentia)” or “the restoration of human nature originally well formed.”<sup>33</sup>

“Rebirth” and “change” are key words to comprehend the significance of Erasmus’ adages, “Magis varius quam hydra (As variable as the hydra)” and “Polypi mentem obtine (Adopt the outlook of the polyp [cephalopod, or squid and octopus]),” *The Seven-Headed Luther*, and *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal* signify—and the ideas also illuminate—what “Renaissance” means because the many-headed Hydra which revives every time Hercules cut the heads off is a symbol of “rebirth” and “change.” Fierce arguments over the continuity and discontinuity between the two ages have been repeated to the present, but people who lived in the Renaissance certainly felt that their age had changed into something new.<sup>34</sup> For instance, Petrarch wrote on the turning point of the ages in a letter:

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<sup>32</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarum libri I-VIII*, trans. Aldo S. Bernaro, vol. 1, 3 vols. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1975) vi. 2, 290-91. See the original Latin text with the French translation, Francesco Petrarca, *Lettres familières, Rerum familiarum*, trans. Christophe Carraud and Frank La Brasca, ed. Ugo Dotti, Les classiques de l’humanisme 12-13, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002) 246-47.

<sup>33</sup> Erasmus, *The Paraclesis* 100.

<sup>34</sup> Konrad Burdach, *Reformation, Renaissance, Humanismus: zwei Abhandlungen über die Grundlage moderner Bildung und Sprachkunst*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Gebrüder Paetel, 1926); Konrad Burdach, *Riforma, Rinascimento, umanesimo: due dissertazioni sui fondamenti della cultura e dell’arte della parola moderne*, Biblioteca storica Sansoni 11 (Firenze: Sansoni, 1935); Herbert Weisinger, “The Renaissance Theory of the Reaction against the Middle Ages as a Cause of the Renaissance,” *Speculum: A Journal of Mediaeval Studies* 20.4 (1945) 461-67; Wallace K. Ferguson, “The Interpretation of the Renaissance: Suggestions for a Synthesis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12.4 (1951) 483-95; Eugenio Garin, *Medioevo e Rinascimento: studi e ricerche*, 2nd ed., Biblioteca universale Laterza (Roma: Laterza, 1987); William Kerrigan and Gordon Braden, *The Idea of the Renaissance* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) 3-35; John L. Watts, “Introduction: History, the Fifteenth Century and the Renaissance,” *The End of the Middle Ages?: England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. John L. Watts, The Fifteenth Century Series (Stroud: Sutton, 1998) 1-22; Walter Rüegg, “Epilogue: The

Multus de historiis sermo erat, quas ita partiti videbamur, ut in novis tu, in antiquis ego viderer expertior (et dicantur *antiquae* quaecumque ante celebratum Romae et veneratum Romanis principibus Christi nomen: *novae* autem ex illo usque ad hanc aetatem) (emphasis added),<sup>35</sup>

Petrarch called the period when the Roman emperors adopted Christianity “*antiqua*

(ancient),” and the period between the adoption and his own age “*nova* (modern).”<sup>36</sup>

Petrarch additionally described the period, or the Middle Ages to us, as an epoch of

“*tenebrae* (darkness or shadows).”<sup>37</sup> Leonardo Bruni, Florentine chancellor and historian,

also criticised the Middle Ages in his *History of the Florentine People* as the age of

barbarism, and stated that “[a]t last those Italian cities that had survived the various floods

of barbarians began to grow and flourish and gradually regained their ancient prestige” after

the break-up of the Carolingian Empire.<sup>38</sup> Not only the Italian Humanists, but also a

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Rise of Humanism,” *Universities in the Middle Ages: Volume 1, A History of the University in Europe*, ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 442-68; Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation*, rep. ed., Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006). For the definition of “Renaissance,” see the note 25 of the Introduction.

<sup>35</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Epistolae de rebus familiaribus et variae*, ed. Giuseppe Fracassetti, 3 vols. (Florence: Typis Felicis Le Monnier, 1859-63) 1.314. The English translation is in Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarum libri I-VIII* 294: “Our conversation was concerned largely with history which we seemed to have divided among us, I being more expert, it seemed, in the ancient, by which we meant the time before the Roman rulers celebrated and venerated the name of Christ, and you in recent times, by which we meant the time from then to the present.”

<sup>36</sup> See also Ferguson 8.

<sup>37</sup> Petrarca, *Epistolae de rebus familiaribus et variae* 3.30-31: “Nolui autem pro tam paucis nominibus claris, tam procul tantasque per tenebras stilum ferre: ideoque vel materiae vel labori parcens, longe ante hoc saeculum historiae limitem statui ac defixi.” Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters, Rerum familiarum libri XVII-XXIV*, trans. Aldo S. Bernardo, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 145: “But I was unwilling for the sake of so few outstanding names to have my composition stray so far and through so many shadows; and so, economizing in both subject and labor, I decided to set as a limit to my account a period before this century.”

<sup>38</sup> Leonardo Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, trans. James Hankins, The I Tatti Renaissance Library, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) 93. The original Latin text is also in Leonardo Bruni, *Leonardo Bruni Aretino Historiarum Florentini populi libri XII e Rerum suo tempore gestarum commentarius*, ed. Emilio Santini, *Rerum italicarum scriptores*. Nuova ed. Tomo XIX, Parte III (Città di Castello: Coi tipi della casa editrice S. Lapi, 1914) 23: “denique quocumque ex variis barbarorum diluviis superfuerant urbes per Italiam, crescere atque florere et in pristinam auctoritatem sese attollere.” See also, Ferguson 11; Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere, Everyman’s Library 129, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996) 46: The arts, “like human bodies, have their birth, their growth, their growing old, and their death; they will now be able to recognize more easily the progress of her second birth and of that very perfection whereto she has risen again in our times”; Giorgio Vasari, *Le Opere di Giorgio Vasari: Pittore e architetto aretino*, Parte Prima, ed. Giovanni Masselli (Firenze: David Passigli e socj, 1832-38) 62.

German Humanist was sensible of the changing age; Ulrich von Hutten attacked Scholasticism and extolled the arts of the new century in his famous autobiographical letter to Willibald Pirckheimer, a Nuremberg councillor and Humanist (1518):

O saeculum! o litterae! juvat vivere; etsi quiescere nondum juvat, Bilibalde!  
vigent studia, florent ingenia. Heus tu, accipe laqueum, barbaries, exilium  
prospice!<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, when we explore Erasmus' two adages on "change" and "transformation" above, we have to consider the possibility that his collection of adages was influenced by this trend of the times. In the annotation of "Polypi mentem obtine," Erasmus refers to Plutarch who says "Adopt the attitude of the many-coloured polyp; / Moving towards a rock, it straightway takes its hue." Moreover, as Erasmus puts it, there was "a well-known proverbial line: "'Tis best in season to be this, or that. This advises us to suit ourselves to every contingency of life, acting the part of Proteus, and changing ourselves into any form as the situation demands.'"<sup>40</sup> In addition to the polyp and Proteus, Erasmus introduces the chameleon as a symbol of changeability with reference to Aristotle: "Aristotle draws a similar metaphor from the chameleon, in his *Ethics*, book 1. He says that anyone who is dependent on fortune, with its sudden changes, will be like a chameleon, continually altering, now happy, now cast down; every time chance puts on a different face, this man changes his face and his mentality."<sup>41</sup>

In this sense, it is no exaggeration to say that Hydra, Proteus, polyp, and chameleon

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<sup>39</sup> Ulrich von Hutten, *Ulrichi de Hutten equitis germani opera quae extant omnia*, ed. Ernst Hermann Joseph Münch, vol. 3, 5 vols. (Berolini: Sumtibus G. Reimer, 1823) 99-100. The English translation is in Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, ed., *A History of the University in Europe: Volume 2, Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 8: "Oh century! Oh knowledge! It is a joy to be alive; but one must not relax, Willibald! Fields of knowledge are flourishing, spirits are stirring, You, barbarism, get a rope and prepare yourself for exile!"

<sup>40</sup> Erasmus *Adages* I i 93.

<sup>41</sup> Erasmus *Adages* I i 93.

as symbols of changeability epitomise the spirit of the Renaissance, which is clearly expressed in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man*. Pope Innocent III placed man under the vertical feudal and Christian order in the Middle Ages, but Pico della Mirandola in the Renaissance positively praised a chameleon-like transformative human self.<sup>42</sup>

Who would not admire this our chameleon? Or who could more greatly admire aught else whatever? It is man who Asclepius of Athens, arguing from his mutability of character and from his self-transforming nature, on just grounds says was symbolized by Proteus in the mysteries.<sup>43</sup>

Of course, this contrast between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is oversimplified, but it would be true that the notion of self or identity in the Middle Ages differed from that in the Renaissance; and more importantly the Renaissance perceived difference in terms of an increased need for the self to change and its ability to do so.<sup>44</sup>

Juan Luis Vives, a Spanish Humanist and philosopher, also supports the view of Pico and Erasmus. Vives tells a fable to praise unlimited human mutability, like that of an actor. In the fable, Jupiter creates the world as a stage for gods' and goddesses' entertainment. Jupiter and other gods and goddesses joyfully watch the stage where

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<sup>42</sup> Pope Innocent III, *On the Misery of Man*, trans. Bernard Murchland, *Two Views of Man: Pope Innocent III, On the Misery of Man, Giannozzo Manetti, On the Dignity of Man*, Milestones of Thought in the History of Ideas (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1966) 1-60.

<sup>43</sup> Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, trans. Elizabeth Livermoore Forbes, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) 225; in the original Latin, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio de hominis dignitate, De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scripti vari*, ed. Eugenio Garin, Edizione nazionale dei classici del pensiero italiano 1 (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1942) 106.

<sup>44</sup> Agnes Heller succinctly summarises the difference of the self as follows: "The appearance of a specifically Renaissance individual changed *the structure of character as well*. Character no longer grew organically from the tasks and expectations fixed in advance by the system of feudal orders; it was self-chosen, winding its way along relatively autonomous paths in the direction set by social expectations, especially the hope of success—and thus it drifted away from the general and approached ever closer to the individual." Agnes Heller, *Renaissance Man*, trans. Richard E. Allen (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) 205. See also Stephen Greenblatt, "At the Table of the Great: More's Self-Fashioning and Self-Cancellation," *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 11-73.

humans skilfully play many parts. The versatile human being is a “multiform Proteus” and ever-changing “like a polypus and a chameleon”; his ability to transform himself freely also signifies divinity.<sup>45</sup> This fable is influenced by the notion of the dignity of transformative man on which Pico and Erasmus wrote. “This fable written by a friend of Erasmus to expound a conception of the dignity of man borrowed from the Italian Humanists may well illustrate the interdependence of the cultural movements of the Renaissance.”<sup>46</sup>

The topos of humans acting on the stage of the world is called *theatrum mundi*.<sup>47</sup> We find it in Jaques’s famous speech, “All the world’s a stage, / And all the men and women merely players” (*As You Like It*, 2.7.139-40) and in Pierre de Ronsard:

Le monde est le Theatre, & les hommes, acteurs.  
La fortune . . . est maitresse de la Scene  
.....  
Les cieux & les destins sont les grands spectateurs,<sup>48</sup>

The tone of Jaques’s speech seems fatalistic, but the beginning of Pico’s *Oration on the Dignity of Man* suggests the possibility that there was an optimistic reception of the topos:

I have read in the records of the Arabians, reverend Fathers, that Abdala the

<sup>45</sup> Juan Luis Vives, *A Fable about Man*, trans. Nancy Lenkeith, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) 389, 390.

<sup>46</sup> Nancy Lenkeith, ed., Introduction, *A Fable about Man*, by Juan Luis Vives, eds. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr., *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) 386; Michele Ciliberto, *Pensare per contrari: disincanto e utopia nel Rinascimento*, 4th ed., Storia e letteratura, raccolta di studi e testi 226 (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2007) 95-115.

<sup>47</sup> On “*theatrum mundi*,” see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953) 138-44; Lynda G. Christian, *Theatrum mundi: The History of an Idea*, Harvard Dissertations in Comparative Literature (New York: Garland, 1987).

<sup>48</sup> Pierre de Ronsard, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Paul Laumonier, Société des textes français modernes, vol. 13, 20 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1948) 212-13. Cited also in Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* 140; Ernst Robert Curtius, “Topica,” *Romanische Forschungen* 55.2 (1941) 175. See also, Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) 153; Christian, 166-67.



Saracen, when questioned as to what *on this stage of the world*, as it were, could be seen most worthy of wonder, replied: “*There is nothing to be seen more wonderful than man.*” In agreement with this opinion is the saying of Hermes Trismegistus: “*A great miracle, Asclepius, is man.*” (emphasis added)<sup>49</sup>

Vives also highly esteems a human being on the stage of the world.<sup>50</sup> Jaques is a melancholic, and probably a follower of the idea of Medieval *contemptus mundi* as found in Pope Innocent III. Humanists such as Pico, Vives, and Giannozzo Manetti insist that the topos of *theatrum mundi* had a positive side.<sup>51</sup> Thomas More in a letter to Erasmus speaks of Vives’ versatility as comparable to a multi-coloured chameleon.<sup>52</sup> Of course, although this is a word of praise for Vives, the letter shows that Humanists in Italy, Holland, Spain, and England shared the idea that a chameleon symbolised changeability. In sum, as “Pico assigns the dignity and excellency of humans entirely to our extraordinary endowment of free will,” for the Renaissance Humanists, playing roles like chameleon, polyp, and Hydra ever-changingly on the theatre of the world was equal to living not with God’s will but with free will of human beings.<sup>53</sup>

Even if, for the Humanists, play and change might be positive, and so free will might indicate change, neither of these related ideas would have been acceptable to Luther. In the following section, we have to explain the reason for his disbelief in free will from the Protestants’ point of view in the Reformation by re-examining Cochlaeus’ *The Seven-Headed Luther* and pointing out the connection between Luther and the

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<sup>49</sup> Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and John Herman Randall, Jr., *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) 223.

<sup>50</sup> Christian 77-86.

<sup>51</sup> See, Pope Innocent III and Giannozzo Manetti, *Two Views of Man: Pope Innocent III, On the Misery of Man, Giannozzo Manetti, On the Dignity of Man*, trans. Bernard Murchland, Milestones of Thought in the History of Ideas (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1966).

<sup>52</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 993-1121 (1519-1520)*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 7 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 291: “you [Erasmus] might think him [Vives] a chameleon, which changes colour as its background changes.”

<sup>53</sup> Bard Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers: A History of the Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996) 226.

many-headed Hydra.

The Humanists glorified changeability as the dignity of man and the sign of the new age, proclaiming that our self-transforming nature is worthy of admiration. Luther asserted a kind of determinism. Therefore, it would have been an act of sacrilege for him to entertain such an idea. Cochlaeus, a Catholic controversialist who was also a Humanist exchanged letters with Erasmus, in *The Seven-Headed Luther* denounced the contradictions in the Lutheran idea on the bondage of the will denied the power of humans to transform themselves. Cochlaeus satirises Luther as follows:

It is indeed a miracle and surpasses all reason and understanding, however sublime and venerable, that in one deity there are three, and these three deities are one—one in substance, yet three in person. But in one cowl of this one Luther, there are seven, and these seven Luthers are not only one in substance, but even in person. An extraordinary theology indeed, hitherto unheard of not only among Jews and heathens, but also among Christians! In the old, most Christian Evangel, there was one heart among the multitude of believers and one soul; yet in this new Evangel one heart and flesh are cut apart into many heads, and not only is it that diverse people hold diverse opinions, but one and the same mind grows several heads next to itself.<sup>54</sup>

The sentences “diverse people hold diverse opinions” and “one and the same mind grows several heads next to itself” remind us of the Hydra representations, although, strangely, no scholars in *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary, 1483-1983*, edited by Peter Newman Brooks, mention the connection between Hydra and Luther.<sup>55</sup> Here, it is important to remember that Fulke Greville connected the Lernaean Hydra with the seven-headed beast in Revelation, as we saw in Chapter 2.<sup>56</sup> Were it to

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<sup>54</sup> Cochlaeus, *Septiceps Lutherus* sig. ij<sup>v</sup>. This translation is in Wiedermann 196. The original Latin text is partly transcribed in Hugo Laemmer, *Die vortridentinisch-Katholische Theologie des Reformations-Zeitalters: aus den Quellen dargestellt* (Berlin: Gustav Schlawitz, 1858) 55-56.

<sup>55</sup> Leif Grane, “The Image of Myth and Reality,” *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary, 1483-1983*, ed. Peter Newman Brooks, rep. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) 232-33.

<sup>56</sup> Fulke Greville, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke*, ed. John Gouws (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986) 63, 208.

have been the case that the seven-headed Luther had represented only the seven-headed dragon of Revelation, Cochlaeus would have not used the verb “grow,” because the heads of the Revelation dragon do not grow, whereas the heads of Hydra grow again whenever Hercules cuts them off.

In addition to the textual dispute above, the Catholic attacks upon Luther’s protean metamorphoses may also have derived from the variety of the visual portraits of the Reformer. Here, we have to examine Luther’s many heads or portraits of his day in detail. The issue and distribution of a portrait was closely connected with political and religious propaganda. In Luther’s case, this connection would have been clear. For example, Luther published a homiliary to justify himself against accusations of heresy after the Leipzig Disputation in 1519, and the earliest portrait of Luther was printed on its title page (Fig. 5.3):

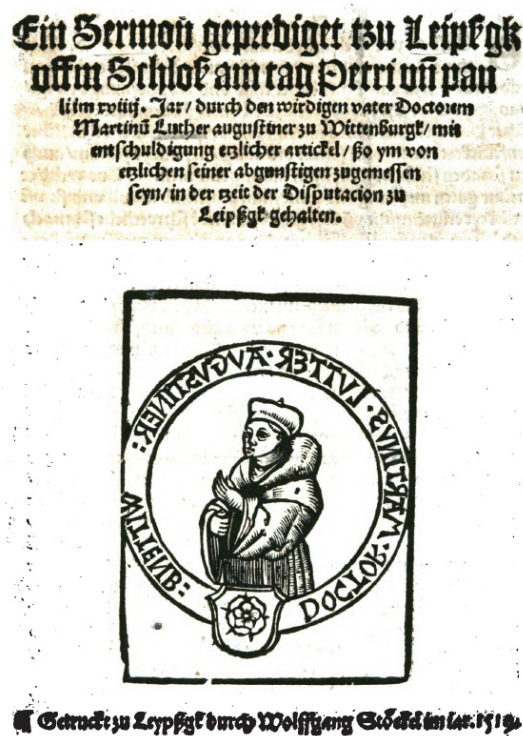


Fig. 5.3. Title Page of Luther’s Sermon (*Ein Sermon gepredigt tzu Leipssgk*), Leipzig,

This rough portrait did not convey his individual character at all, but aimed to emphasise his appearance, that of a pious priest.<sup>58</sup> Lucas Cranach who was appointed court painter to the Elector Frederick of Saxony at Wittenberg portrayed Luther in 1520 (Fig. 5.4):

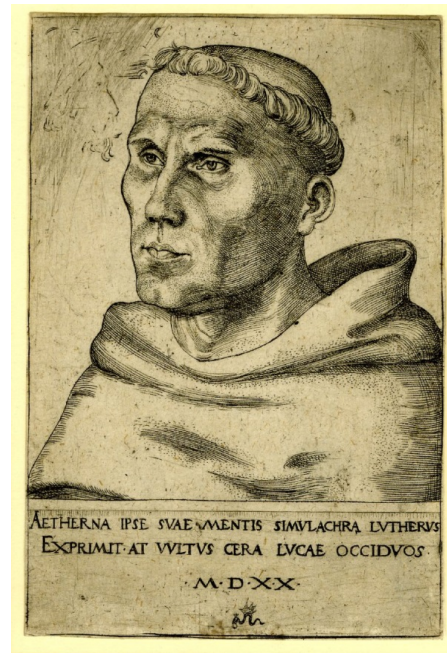


Fig. 5.4. *Martin Luther as an Augustinian Friar*, Drawn by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1520.<sup>59</sup>

This portrait skilfully expresses the dauntlessness of Luther as a reformer. It was not circulated widely, probably because the court of Wittenberg judged that portrait and doctrine alike were too radical, and feared that this resolute Luther might make people think

<sup>57</sup> Martin Luther, *Ein Sermon gepredigt tzu Leipssgk vffm Schloss am Tag Petri vpaui ym. xviii. Jar / durch den wirdigen vater Doctorem Martinu Luther augustiner zu Wittenburgk: mit entschuldigung etzlicher artickelsso ym von etzlichen seiner abguenstigen zugemessen seyn in der tzeit der Disputacion zu Leipssgk gehalten* (Leipzig: Wolfgang Stöckel, 1519) title page. The courtesy of die Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek. <<http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/resolve/display/bsb10161471.html>> The illustration of the title page is also in Bott, Ebeling and Moeller, eds., *Martin Luther* 121; Warnke 9. See also, Denis Janz, *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999) 85; Dietrich Korsch, "Luther's Seal as an Elementary Interpretation of His Theology," *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert, Lutheran Quarterly Books (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004) 60.

<sup>58</sup> Warnke 9-11.

<sup>59</sup> The courtesy of the British Museum. Museum number: 1837,0616.363. Bott, Ebeling and Moeller, eds., *Martin Luther* 132-33; Dieter Koepplin and Tilman Falk, eds., *Lukas Cranach: Gemälde, Zeichnungen, Druckgraphik*, Ausstellung im Kunstmuseum Basel, 15. Juni-8. September 1974, 2 vols. (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1974-76) 91-92; Bartrum 176-77; Belgrave 36-37.

the court policy too aggressive.<sup>60</sup> Next, the court of Wittenberg requested Cranach to produce another portrait of Luther in the same year (Fig. 5.5):



Fig. 5.5. *Martin Luther as an Augustinian Friar*, Drawn by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1520.<sup>61</sup>

On this occasion, Cranach portrayed Luther as peaceful and moderate, and his gentle expression suggests that he is about to speak kindly. This was a political stratagem of the court, which intended to make the mild-mannered image of Luther widely known, because the Diet of Worms, in which Luther was summoned for examination, was just around the corner.<sup>62</sup>

The Edict of Worms announced the proscription of Luther's books, and the Edict compelled Luther to sometimes disguise himself as a commonplace squire for

<sup>60</sup> Warnke 24-27; Christiane Andersson, and Charles W. Talbot, ed., *From a Mighty Fortress: Prints, Drawings, and Books in the Age of Luther, 1483-1546* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1983) 232-33.

<sup>61</sup> The courtesy of the British Museum. Museum number: 1854,1113.232. Bartrum 176-77; Belgrave 38-39.

<sup>62</sup> Warnke 27-31.



self-protection. The Elector Frederick of Saxony at Wittenberg gave refuge to Luther in the Castle of the Wartburg near Eisenach. Luther translated the New Testament into German in the Castle, but in December 1521 he secretly returned to Wittenberg, where Lucas Cranach made a portrait of Luther as Junker Jörg (Fig. 5.6):

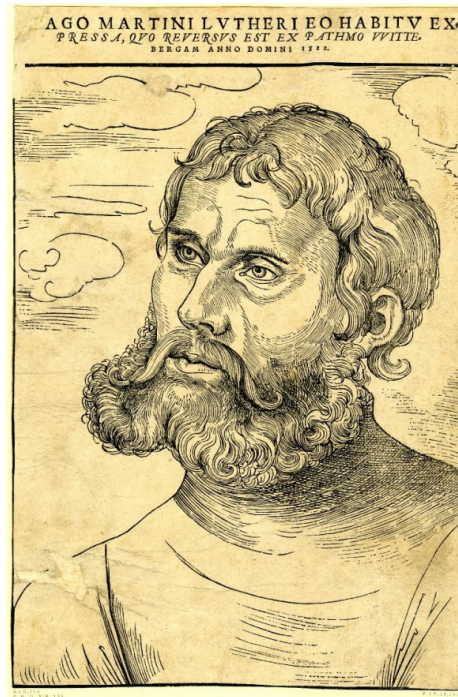


Fig. 5.6. *Martin Luther as Junker Jörg*, Drawn by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1522.<sup>63</sup>

The Latin text at the top of the portrait explains the process of production: “This is a picture of Luther as he looked when he came back from Patmos to Wittenberg in 1522” (Luther called the solitary Castle “the Isle of Patmos” of St. John).<sup>64</sup> Luther has cultivated a fine beard, and his tonsure is overgrown. “This portrait was bound to inspire respect, for Cranach meticulously and vividly painted the beard and costume of Luther as a knight with

<sup>63</sup> The courtesy of the British Museum. Museum number: O,3.190. Campbell Dodgson, ed., *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (London: The Trustees, 1911) 316-18; Bott, Ebeling and Moeller, eds., *Martin Luther* 166-67; Geisberg and Strauss, eds., *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550-1600* 605; Warnke 49-51.

<sup>64</sup> Andersson and Talbot 236-37.

a dignified touch.”<sup>65</sup> This impression the several portraits convey is that Luther played many roles, not only religious but also secular similar to that of a nobleman.

Even if these four heads or portraits of Luther as a pious priest, a strong-willed Augustinian monk, a gentle monk, and a heroic Junker Jörg were controlled by various intentions of the court of Wittenberg, they indicate that a variety of Lutheran images was distributed widely at that time. Luther’s followers might have superficially understood that this variety was proof of his popularity and of the preternatural power whereby he could change himself like Proteus, the sea god who could change his shape at will in Greek mythology.<sup>66</sup>

Cochlaeus in *The Seven-Headed Luther* aimed to satirise the many roles assigned to Luther. The denial of free will by Luther should logically lead to denial of role-playing, since a person could not play a part without his or her free will. Nevertheless, in *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal*, the Protestant refuter of *The Seven-Headed Luther* could not understand the point of Cochlaeus’ satire, probably because Luther’s belief had not yet been accepted properly by his contemporaries or even his followers.

Luther himself encountered the difficulty of the permeation of his belief into people’s minds, but only Erasmus could understand the point at issue. Luther praises Erasmus:

I praise and commend you highly for this also, that unlike all the rest you alone have attacked the real issue, the essence of the matter in dispute, and have not wearied me with irrelevancies about the papacy, purgatory, indulgences, and such like trifles (for trifles they are rather than basic issues), with which almost everyone hitherto has gone hunting for me without success. You and you alone have seen the question on which everything hinges, and have aimed at the vital spot; for which I sincerely thank you, since I am only too glad to give as much attention to this subject as time and leisure permit.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Koepplin and Falk, eds., *Lukas Cranach* 98. The translation is mine.

<sup>66</sup> Warnke 51.

<sup>67</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 333.

To Luther and Erasmus, the “real issue, the essence of the matter in dispute” was free will, but other people could not understand “the vital spot.” Hence, the Protestant refuter focused on the tiara or triple crown symbolising “papacy” and “indulgences” in the woodcut of *The Seven-Headed Papal Animal* without recognising that the Roman Catholic Church criticised the contradictions in the Lutheran idea on the bondage of the will. This proves that, from Luther’s point of view, the discussion on free will eluded the comprehension of the majority of people. These focussed instead on the concerns foregrounded by the Protestant refuter’s image (Fig. 5.2).

The doctrinal content of Lutheranism was clarified in later ages and in other places or countries; his idea of the bondage of the will was systematically organised by Jean Calvin, whose predestination was reflected in English anti-theatrical works.<sup>68</sup> The English anti-theatrical polemicists, such as William Perkins, Stephen Gosson, and William Prynne, supported and shared what may be called determinism in their works.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Matthew Levering, *Predestination: Biblical and Theological Paths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 98-110; Peter J. Thuesen, *Predestination: The American Career of a Contentious Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 30; François Wendel, *Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*, trans. Philip Mairet (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997) 263-84. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge, 2 vols. (London: James Clarke, 1957) 1.221-47, 2.202-11. On Jean Calvin’s predestination, see, especially, Book 2, Chapter 2, “Man Now Deprived of Freedom of Will, and Miserably Enslaved,” and Book 3, Chapter 21 “Of the Eternal Election, by Which God Has Predestinated Some to Salvation and Others to Destruction.”

<sup>69</sup> Both William Perkins and Stephen Gosson were Church of England clergymen, but Perkins belonged to “the moderate puritan tradition,” and Gosson was “a vigorous opponent of Puritanism.” See Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 10; William A. Ringler, *Stephen Gosson: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Princeton: Princeton university press, 1942) 80. William Prynne was a Puritan anti-theatrical pamphleteer and lawyer. See William Lamont, “Prynne, William (1600–1669),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, Oxford University Press, 13 AUG 2013 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22854>>. On Perkins, Gosson, and Prynne, see also respectively, W. B. Patterson, “William Perkins as Apologist for the Church of England,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 57.2 (2006) 252-69; Arthur F. Kinney, *Markets of Bawdrie: The Dramatic Criticism of Stephen Gosson*, Salzburg Studies in English Literature: Elizabethan Studies 4 (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1974); William M. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne, 1600-1669*, Studies in Political History (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963). As Thuesen points out, “Historians have debated the usefulness of the term Puritan because of the difficulties, especially in the Tudor age, of identifying a coherent Puritanism or Anglicanism” (236). On the problem of defining “Puritan,” see also Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) 21-28; William Lamont, *Puritanism*



Perkins stresses the importance of one's calling:

For even as the souldiour in the field, must not change his place, wherein he is placed by the Generall, but must abide by it, to the venturing of his life: so must the Christian continue and abide in his calling, without change or alteration. There is a certaine lightnesse in the nature of man. . . . the holy Ghost meeteth with this lightnes, by commanding every man to continue constant in doing the duties of his particular calling: Let every man abide in that vocation wherein he was called.<sup>70</sup>

As Jonas A. Barish puts it, "[to] change. . . is to fall" for the anti-theatrical polemicists, and an actor, whose trade is "founded on change, becomes a lively image of fallen man."<sup>71</sup>

This brings us to the topic of change in the realm of representation. Stephen Gosson who wrote *The School of Abuse* in 1579, also says in his *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* in 1582: "every man must show him selfe outwardly to be such as in deed he is. Outward signes consist eyther in words or gestures, to declare our selves by wordes or by gestures to be otherwise then we are, is an act executed where it should not, therefore a lye."<sup>72</sup>

Moreover, William Prynne published a "pamphlet" of over 1000 pages, *Histrion-Matrix: The Players Scourge, or, Actors Tragoedie* to attack actors and playhouses in 1632.<sup>73</sup> As the title page clearly shows, he violently disliked theatrical activities.

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and *Historical Controversy* (London: UCL Press, 1996) 1.

<sup>70</sup> William Perkins, "A Treatise of the Vocations, or, Calling of Men with the Sorts and Kinds of Them, and the Right Use Thereof," *The Works of That Famous and Worthie Minister of Christ, in the Universitie of Cambridge, M.W. Perkins Gathered into One Volume, and Newly Corrected According to His Owne Copies*, STC (2nd ed.): 19647 (Cambridge: John Legate, 1603) 931, sig. Mmmm 5<sup>r</sup>. This "Treatise" is partly transcribed in the following collected works: William Perkins, "A Treatise of the Vocations or Calling of Men with the Sorts and Kinds of Them and the Right Use Thereof," *The Work of William Perkins*, ed. Ian Breward, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 3 (Abingdon, England: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970) 470. See also his article discussing free will, William Perkins, "A Treatise of Gods Free Grace, and Mans Free-Will," *The Works of That Famous and Worthie Minister of Christ, in the Universitie of Cambridge, M.W. Perkins Gathered into One Volume, and Newly Corrected According to His Owne Copies*, STC (2nd ed.): 19647 (Cambridge: John Legate, 1603) [869]-901, sigs. Ffff 6<sup>r</sup>-Iiii 6<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> Jonas A. Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) 105.

<sup>72</sup> Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in Five Actions Proving That They Are Not to Be Suffred in a Christian Common Weale, by the Waye Both the Cavils of Thomas Lodge, and the Play of Playes, Wwritten in Their Defence, and Other Objections of Players Frenedes, Are Truely Set downe and Directlye Aunswared*, STC (2nd ed.): 12095 (London: Thomas Gosson, 1582) sig. E5<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> For the ideological background of anti-theatre polemicists, Barish 80-190; Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic*

Prynne thought that the theatre was inappropriate for Christians: “the Profession of Play-poets, of Stage-players; together with the penning, acting, and frequenting of Stage-playes, are unlawfull, infamous and misbeseeming Christians.”<sup>74</sup> One of his reasons is that acting is based upon hypocrisy. He refers to Tertuillian, Augustine, and sundry other Fathers in asserting that God has given “every creature a being that may neither be denied nor altered”<sup>75</sup>:

For God, *who is truth it selfe*, in whom there is no variablenesse, no shadow of change no feining, no hypocrisie; as he hath given a uniforme distinct and proper being to every creature, the bounds of which may not be exceeded: so he requires that the actions of every creature should be honest and sincere, devoyde of all hypocrisie, as all his actions, and their natures are. Hence he enjoyes all men at all times, to be such in shew, as they are in truth: to seeme that outwardly which they are inwardly; to act themselves, not others. . . .<sup>76</sup>

Players are evil because, like the chameleon and Proteus, they aim to substitute another self for the one given them by God; players “threaten God’s primacy by challenging his uniqueness.”<sup>77</sup> The denial of change and free will is the crux of predestination. Perkins concisely summarises Calvin’s predestination which Luther originally introduced:

God hath determined what he will doe with every man, and. . . he hath in his eternall counsell assigned every man his office and condition of life. For there is in God a pleasure whereby he may doe with euery man what he will. And by his eternall counsell, he seperates every man from the very wombe to one calling, or other: and accordingly he calles them in time by giving giftes, and will, to doe that, for which they were appointed.<sup>78</sup>

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*Renaissance in England*, trans. James P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953) 65-75; Margot Heinemann, “Puritanism, Censorship and Opposition to the Theatre,” *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 1980) 18-47; Adrian Streete, “Anti-Drama, Anti-Church: Debating the Early Modern Theatre,” *Protestantism and Drama in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 129-39.

<sup>74</sup> The title page of William Prynne, *Histrion-Mastix: The Players Scovrge, or, Actors Tragedie, Divided into Two Parts*, STC (2nd ed.): 20464a (London: E.A. and W.I. for Michael Sparke, 1633).

<sup>75</sup> Barish 92.

<sup>76</sup> Prynne 159; sig. X4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>77</sup> Barish 93. Prynne adds, “Christ, reject and abominate Players and Stage-playes, as vanities and false frenzies,” and he compares “Stage-playes” with “the vanities of life, and the *hydra* of pleasures” (129; sig. S<sup>r</sup>: emphasis added).

<sup>78</sup> William Perkins and Ralph Cudworth, *A Commentarie or Exposition, vpon the Fiue First Chapters of*

Perkins follows Calvin who made predestination centred to his thinking. Moreover, the idea had begun with Luther, who strongly asserts this predestination in *De servo arbitrio*. Luther and Calvin basically shared the concept of predestination, as Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks state that Luther “argues for a doctrine of predestination, derived from Augustine, that corresponds closely to Calvin’s later doctrine.”<sup>79</sup> Therefore, *The Seven-Headed Luther* severely criticises the contradictions in the basic doctrine of Luther, who emphasises an absolute identity and sincerity, yet at the same time is himself constantly changing.<sup>80</sup>

A key to approaching “the vital spot” of the discussion on the topic of identity between Erasmus and Luther is the adjective “seven-headed” or “many-headed,” because, as with Cochlaeus in *The Seven-Headed Luther*, the aim of the attack is the ever-changing many-headed-Hydra-like identity of Luther, who stated clearly that “free choice is completely prostrated and shattered” and “freedom of choice is. . . nothing in the sight of

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*the Epistle to the Galatians: Penned by the Godly, Learned, and Iudiciall Diuine, Mr. W. Perkins. Now Published for the Benefit of the Church, and Continued with a Supplement vpon the Sixt Chapter, by Rafe Cudworth Bachelour of Diuinitie*, STC (2nd ed.): 19680 (Cambridge: Iohn Legat, 1604) 48; sig. F4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>79</sup> Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks, “Introduction: Protestantism-The Problem of Identity,” *The Blackwell Companion to Protestantism*, eds. Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks, Blackwell Companions to Religion (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 8.

<sup>80</sup> Puritans condemn actors for their ambiguous sex. A criterion of the antitheatricalists was Deuteronomy 22:5: “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.” Stephen Gosson says in his *Playes Confuted in Five Actions*: “God . . . chargeth thee not to put on womens garments, chargeth thee in no place, and never to put *them* on” (sig. E4<sup>v</sup>). Phillip Stubbes, Puritan pamphleteer, also rages in his Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses Contayning a Discoverie, or Briefe Summarie of Such Notable Vices and Imperfections, As Now Raigne in Many Christian Countreyes of the Worlde*, STC (2nd ed.): 23376 (London: 1583) sig. F.v.<sup>v</sup>: “Our Apparell was given us as a signe distinctiue to discern betwixt sex and sex, & therfore one to weare the Apparell of another sex, is to participate with the same, and to adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde. Wherefore these Women may not improperly be called Hermaphroditi, that is, Monsters of bothe kindes, half women, half men.” William Perkins remarks more radically that “excessive and wanton apparell” is sinful, because “[i]t marketh a confusion of such degrees and callings as God hath ordained,” in William Perkins, *A Golden Chaine: Or the Description of Theologie Containing the Order of the Causes of Saluation and Damnation, according to Gods Word. A View Whereof Is to Be Seene in the Table Annexed. Hereunto Is Adioyned the Order Which M. Theodore Beza Vsed in Comforting Afflicted Consciences*, STC (2nd ed.): 19646 (Cambridge: Iohn Legat, 1600) 84, sig. F2<sup>v</sup>, 85, sig. F3<sup>r</sup>. In brief, they tried to revive the Mosaic rule against cross-dressing and to bring the injunction to bear on the player. And these pamphlets indicate the Puritans’ hatred (and fascination, I suppose) toward the boy actors who played women’s roles on stage.

God.”<sup>81</sup> We will see below that Martin Warnke thinks that the representation of the seven-headed Luther is derived only from the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse.<sup>82</sup> But this interpretation is too limiting because the critic fails to consider the representation of the many-headed Hydra which is suggested in one of the Luther’s seven heads.

As we have seen above, Barabbas is depicted in *The Seven-Headed Luther* as one head among the seven heads (Fig. 5.7):



Fig. 5.7. Enlarged Part of Barabbas in *The Seven-Headed Luther* (Fig. 5.1)

A club is placed near the head of Barabbas, and this club reminds us of the representation of a medieval “Wild Man.”<sup>83</sup> The Wild Man in the Middle Ages was a symbol of wild power against the authority of the church; and the capture and control of the Wild man would mean a victory of authority over anti-establishment.<sup>84</sup> Therefore it is appropriate

<sup>81</sup> Luther, *De servo arbitrio* 118.

<sup>82</sup> Warnke 51-52.

<sup>83</sup> Scribner 233.

<sup>84</sup> On the Wild Man, see Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952); Lise Lotte Möller, *Die wilden Leute des Mittelalters: Ausstellung vom 6. September bis zum 30. Oktober, 1963* (Hamburg: Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, 1963); Timothy Husband and Gloria Gilmore-House, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980); Dorothy Yamamoto, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Roger Bartra, *Wild Men in the Looking Glass: The Mythic Origins of European Otherness*, trans. Carl T. Berrisford (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); Edward Dudley and Maximilian Erwin Novak, *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972).

that Luther as a reformer was compared to Barabbas who represented the Wild Men.

The club certainly characterises the dissident Wild man, but the following woodcut suggests another possible interpretation of the club (Fig. 5.8):



Fig. 5.8. “Two-Headed Luther,” Title Page of Johannes Cochlaeus, *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri*, Leipzig, 1529.<sup>85</sup>

This woodcut is another variation of the many-headed Luther, and it is found on the title page of *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri* (*A Dialogue on the War against the Turks, against Luther's Illogic*) by the same Johannes Cochlaeus who wrote *The Seven-Headed Luther*. In this woodcut Luther has two heads. The left head represents

<sup>85</sup> Johann Cochlaeus, *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri* (Leipzig: 1529) title page. The courtesy of the British Library. This woodcut is also in Scribner 233. On the response to the war against the Ottoman Turks from Erasmus, Cochlaeus, and Luther, see Michael J. Heath, ed., Introduction, *A Most Useful Discussion Concerning Proposals for War against the Turks, Including an Exposition of Psalm 28, Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo, et obiter enarratus psalmus 28*, by Desiderius Erasmus, trans. Michael J. Heath, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 64 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 202-09; Daniel J. Vitkus, ed., Introduction, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000) 8; Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005) 26-30. See also Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1967) 225.

Palinodus from *palinōidia* in Greek meaning “Recanter” which implies Luther’s duplicity.<sup>86</sup> The right head is Luther’s, its beard recalling that of Junker Jörg, and “the addition of a club also makes it an allusion to the Wild Man.”<sup>87</sup> However, this interpretation of R.W. Scribner and Werner Hofmann is not entirely satisfactory because they neglect the importance of the combination of the many-headed figure and the club. In short, the club is a reminiscence of Hercules, and the many-headed figure is that of the vicious Hydra slain by Hercules. Is this a strained interpretation? We will attempt to show in the next section that the interpretation of the club is incorrect. Scholars such as Werner Hofmann, R. W. Scribner, and Martin Warnke, failed to notice the connection between the many-headed figure and the club.

Another spiny club in a woodcut showing Luther not as a Hydra but as a Hercules will support this interpretation. Just as Coriolanus transforms from Hercules to Hydra, so does Luther appear in both. We saw in Chapter 3 that Erasmus compares himself to Hercules, and Holbein portrays a smiling Herculean Erasmus. However, the same Holbein engraved the Herculean woodcut named “Luther as ‘Hercules Germanicus’ Fighting against the Enemies” (Fig. 5.9):

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<sup>86</sup> Johannes Cochlaeus, “The Deeds and Writings of Dr Martin Luther from the Year of the Lord 1517 to the Year 1546 Related Chronologically to All Posterity,” trans. Elizabeth Vandiver, *Luther’s Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther*, eds. Elizabeth Vandiver, Ralph Keen and Thomas D. Frazel (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) 244. See also Heath, ed., Introduction 205.

<sup>87</sup> Scribner 233-34. Werner Hofmann also agrees with Scribner’s interpretation: Hofmann, ed., *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst* 160-61.



Fig. 5.9. Luther as “Hercules Germanicus” Fighting against the Enemies, Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1522.<sup>88</sup>

This spiny club of the Herculean Luther recalls the clubs in *The Seven-Headed Luther* and *Two-Headed Luther* in the Johannes Cochlaeus’ woodcuts. Given that the woodcut of the German Hercules was drawn by the same Holbein who produced the portrait of the Herculean Erasmus, we cannot help thinking that the woodcut deserves more attention than it has hitherto received.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Bott, Ebeling and Moeller, eds., *Martin Luther* 209; F. W. H. Hollstein, *Hollstein’s German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400-1700*, eds. Tilman Falk and Robert Zijlma, vol. 14, Ambrosius Holbein to Hans Holbein the Younger (Roosendaal, Netherlands: Koninklijke van Poll, 1988) 138-39; Warnke, *Cranachs Luther* 55, fig. 34; Scribner 32-34.

<sup>89</sup> Warburg, “Pagan-Antique Prophecy” 635, 765, 767; in original German, Warburg, “Heidnisch-antike Weissagung” 521-522, 653. See also, Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann, “Drei wiedergefundene Werke aus Holbeins früherer Baslerzeit,” *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 4.1 (1904) 18-44; Hans Reinhardt, “Einige Bemerkungen zum graphischen Werk Hans Holbeins des Jüngeren,” *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 34 (1977) 242-43; Frank Hieronymus,

First, since Holbein etched the Wild Man with a club, we might think that he portrayed Luther too as the Wild Man with a club (Fig. 5.10):



Fig. 5.10. “The Wild Man,” Drawn by Hans Holbein the Younger, c. 1528.<sup>90</sup>

However, the shape of the club, or stump, is not spiny, and it is obvious that Holbein clearly distinguished Hercules from the Wild Man. The Luther with the thorny club in *The Seven-Headed Luther* and *Two-Headed Luther*, therefore, is not necessarily connected with the Wild Man.

When Holbein produced the woodcut of “Hercules Germanicus,” he probably had in mind the tradition of “Hercules Germanicus” typified by a woodcut of Maximilian I, Holy

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*Oberrheinische Buchillustration 2: Basler Buchillustration 1500-1545*, Universitätsbibliothek Basel, 31. März bis 30. Juni 1984 (Basel: Universitätsbibliothek Basel, 1984) 466-67; Oskar Bätschmann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997) 221. Reinhardt suggests the possibility that this engraving is attributed to another painter, but F. W. H. Hollstein rejects this opinion (138-39).

<sup>90</sup> The courtesy of the British Museum. Museum number: 1895,0915.992. See also, Hans Holbein the Younger, *Hans Holbein d.J.: Zeichnungen aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung Basel*, ed. Christian Müller (Basel: Kunstmuseum Basel, 1988) 15.



Roman Emperor (Fig. 5.11)<sup>91</sup>:

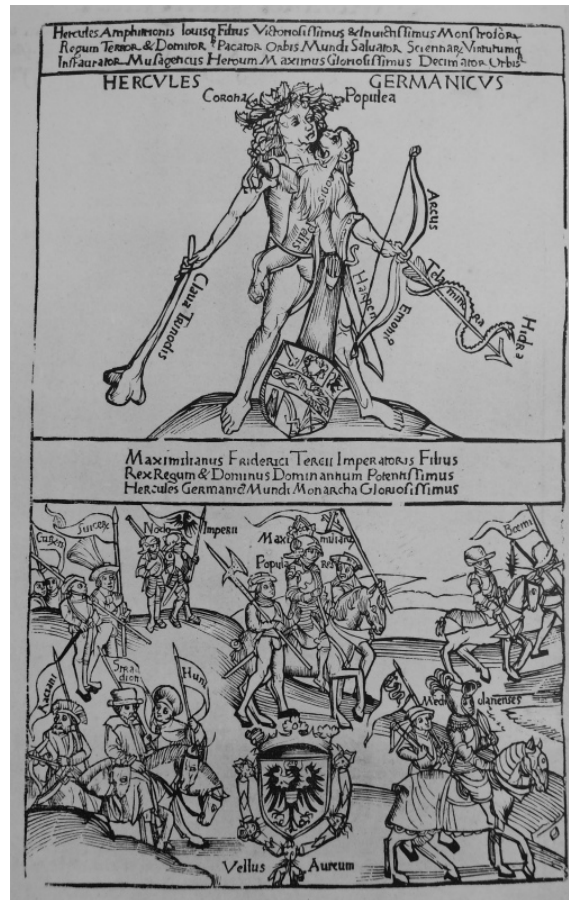


Fig. 5.11. “Hercules Germanicus and Maximilian, King of the Romans,” Engraved by an Unidentified Artist, c. 1500.<sup>92</sup>

Moreover, since Karl V, Holy Roman Emperor, was related by blood to the House of Habsburg, and Maximilian I was his grandfather, a coin designed in Milan of the Herculean Karl V, whose shoulder is adorned with the Nemean Lion slain by Hercules, can be called a variation of the “Hercules Germanicus” motif (Fig. 5.12)<sup>93</sup>:

<sup>91</sup> On Maximilian I as “Hercules Germanicus,” see William C McDonald, “Maximilian I of Habsburg and the Veneration of Hercules: On the Revival of Myth and the German Renaissance,” *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6.1 (1976) 139-54; Georg Braungart, “Mythos und Herrschaft: Maximilian I. als Hercules Germanicus,” *Traditionswandel und Traditionsverhalten: Herausgegeben von Walter Haug und Burghart Wachinger*, Fortuna vitrea 5 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1991) 77-95.

<sup>92</sup> Campbell Dodgson, ed., *Woodcuts of the XV Century in the Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum*, 2 vols. (London: British Museum, 1934-35) 26, plate CXIb; Braungart 87; Warnke 56, fig. 35.

<sup>93</sup> Warnke 48-49.



Fig. 5.12. Coin of Herculean Karl V Designed in Milan.<sup>94</sup>

Holbein depicted both Erasmus and Luther as Hercules in this tradition, but there are striking differences between the two portrayals. One of the differences lie in their personalities: Erasmus is peaceful or moderate, Luther belligerent or aggressive. Erasmus was an ironical observer of the current of the times, but cherished the maintenance of harmonious relations. Erasmus confides to readers of his *De libero arbitrio* (*A Discussion of Free Will*) that he has “always had a deep-seated inner revulsion from conflict,” and says, “The debate will be carried on without abuse, both because this is more seemly for Christians, and because it is a surer way of discovering the truth, which is often lost in too much angry repartee.”<sup>95</sup> As Erasmus remarks in the preface to his edition of St. Hilary of Poitiers in 1523, “The sum and substance of our religion is peace and concord” and “Let the absence of furious contention, the bane of peace and concord, prevail everywhere.”<sup>96</sup> “It

<sup>94</sup> Warnke 72.

<sup>95</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *A Discussion of Free Will, De libero arbitrio*, trans. Peter Macardle, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 76 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 7. Erasmus preached toleration in the age of religious intolerance which was brought about by the Reformation. See Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996) 43-101.

<sup>96</sup> John C. Olin, trans., *Six Essays on Erasmus and a Translation of Erasmus' Letter to Carondelet, 1523* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979) 100, 117. This preface was dedicated to Jean de Carondelet, a high official at the Hapsburg court in the Low Countries, as a letter from Erasmus. See Olin 93. For this often-quoted preface, see also, James Kelsey McConica, “Erasmus and the Grammar

is clear from. . . the general tenor of his writings that concord among Christians was a matter of the utmost gravity to him.”<sup>97</sup>

As for another difference, Erasmus detested belonging to a clique because he thought that every clique had only incomplete truth. We find this in a letter to Luther on 30 May, 1519. It was the first letter addressed to Luther: “Everywhere we must. . . say nothing out of arrogance or faction; for I think the spirit of Christ would have it so.”<sup>98</sup> He was hostile to vociferous dispute and tumult; even when a heated argument arose, he was a self-possessed scholar, and did not lose his reason.<sup>99</sup> “Tumult” and “sedition” are subjects of detestation, and “peace” and “concord” are to be longed for.<sup>100</sup>

In contrast, as scholars note, Luther, like a stern prophet, fights against everything he sees as opposed in the Gospel, and wants to intensify hostile relations.<sup>101</sup> Erasmus disliked Luther’s ruthless language; his unease is moderately expressed, for example, in a letter to Melanchthon in June, 1520.<sup>102</sup> As Erasmus himself says he is “in favour of the man [Luther], as far as one can be,” Erasmus basically supports Luther’s push for the reformation of the corrupted Roman Catholic Church. Erasmus deplores the corruption of friars: “The world. . . is burdened with the tyranny of the mendicant friars who, though they

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of Consent,” *Scrinium Erasmianum: Mélanges historiques publiés sous le patronage de l’Université de Louvain à l’occasion du cinquième centenaire de la naissance d’Érasme*, ed. Joseph Coppens, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969) 84-85.

<sup>97</sup> James Kelsey McConica, *Erasmus*, Past Masters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 75-76.

<sup>98</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 842-992 (1518-1519)*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 393.

<sup>99</sup> On Erasmus’ peaceful and Luther’s belligerent personality, see Heinrich Weinstock, *Die Tragödie des Humanismus: Wahrheit und Trug im abendländischen Menschenbild*, 2nd ed. (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1954) 174-76.

<sup>100</sup> McConica, *Erasmus* 75.

<sup>101</sup> Weinstock 174-75; Manfred Hoffmann, “Language and Reconciliation: Erasmus’ Ecumenical Attitude,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 15.1 (1995) 71; Michael C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies*, *Oxford Studies in Historical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 15.

<sup>102</sup> For the circulation of Erasmus’ letters in Germany, see Peter G. Bietenholz, “Erasmus and the German Public, 1518-1520: The Authorized and Unauthorized Circulation of His Correspondence,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8.2 (1977) 60-78.

are servants of the Roman See, have risen to such influence and such numbers that the pope himself—yes, even kings themselves—find them formidable.”<sup>103</sup> Nevertheless, Erasmus sometimes finds Luther’s language offensive: “Luther’s supporters. . . would wish that some of what he has written were more courteously and moderately expressed.”<sup>104</sup> Apprehensive about Luther’s strong stance on reformation, he wrote a letter to Nicholas Bérault, a French Humanist: “Oh, if that man [Luther] had either left things alone, or made his attempt more cautiously and in moderation!”<sup>105</sup> In other letters, Erasmus criticises Luther’s excesses: “a sort of immoderate energy has carried him, in my opinion at least, beyond the bounds of justice”; “I wonder very much. . . what god has stirred up Luther’s heart to make him write with such freedom of invective against the Roman pontiff, against all the universities, against philosophy, and against the mendicant orders.”<sup>106</sup> These opposing personalities, clearly evoked in the texts we have examined, of Erasmus and Luther are vividly presented in the woodcuts of Holbein.

In Holbein’s broadsheet woodcut the Herculean Luther who wears an Augustinian cowl and the skin of the Nemean Lion slain by Hercules with the deadly club is about to kill Hoogstraten, the Dominican inquisitor. The Pope, who reminds us of Geryon with three bodies and heads Hercules killed in his tenth labour, dangles from Luther’s nose. The ground is littered with the dead bodies of Luther’s adversaries, such as Occam, St. Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, Holcot, Nicolas of Lyra, Peter Lombard, and Aristotle, who have already been slain by Luther.<sup>107</sup> The following epigram added to the woodcut brings out

<sup>103</sup> Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 993-1121* 112.

<sup>104</sup> Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 993-1121* 313.

<sup>105</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1122-1251 (1520-1521)*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 8 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 155.

<sup>106</sup> Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1122-1251* 203.

<sup>107</sup> Theophil Burckhardt-Biedermann, “Über Zeit und Anlaß des Flugblattes: Luther als Hercules Germanicus,” *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 4.1 (1904) 38-39. See also, Fritz

its implications:

Impious Rome, do you not dread your enemy, Luther, the German Alcides [Hercules] who destroys monsters? Do you not see how he will hang the triple-(bodied) Geryon by his hooked nose, and suspend his head by its hanging hair? Behold for yourself how he will strike with force the insane sophists, and with his strong club will drive off the rabid dogs? Behold, that unhealthy cohort, in comparison with which Cerberus gives way, and which is a Hydra fertile with new jaws, collapses. Do you not therefore recognise your strong Lord and equal, to whom you once before stretched out your hands [in supplication] when smitten? Believe me, having made enough error, be wise, and reform yourself, or the accursed flames of impure Lerna await you.<sup>108</sup>

Geryon, Cerberus, and Hydra are all many-headed monsters killed by Hercules. Holbein's depiction of the Pope as the three-bodied Geryon belongs to the same tradition in which, for example, the English Protestants compared the Roman Catholic Church to a many-headed Hydra.<sup>109</sup>

The epigram must be read carefully; Theophil Burckhardt-Biedermann and Fritz Saxl

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Saxl, "Holbein and the Reformation," *Lectures*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1957) 282; Konrad Hoffmann, "Typologie, Exemplarik und reformatorische Bildsatire," *Kontinuität und Umbruch: Theologie und Frömmigkeit in Flugschriften und Kleinliteratur an der Wende vom 15. zum 16. Jahrhundert*, eds. Josef Nolte, Hella Tompert and Christof Windhorst (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978) 204; Hofmann, ed., *Luther und die Folgen für die Kunst* 158-59; Walter Sparr, "Hercules Christianus: Mythographie und Theologie in der frühen Neuzeit," *Mythographie der frühen Neuzeit: Ihre Anwendung in den Künsten*, ed. Walther Killy, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 27 (Wiesbaden: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1984) 76-81; Meinolf Trudzinski, "Von Holbein zu Brueghel," *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 23 (1984) 67-69; Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand: Martin Luther*, rep. ed. (Tring, England: Lion Publishing, 1988) 121-22; Sachiko Kusukawa, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: The Case of Philip Melancthon*, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 46-49; Gülpen 340-43; Scribner 32-34.

<sup>108</sup> The original Latin epigram is transcribed in Burckhardt-Biedermann 39-40:

Germanum Alcidem tollentem monstra Lutherum  
Hostem non horres, impia Roma, tuum?  
Nonne vides, naso ut triplicem suspenderit unco  
Geryonem, et lasset pendula crista caput?  
Ecce tibi, insanos feriat qua mole sophistas  
Urgeat et rabidos strenua clava canes.  
Ecce cadit male sana cohors, cui cerberus ipse  
Cedit, et in fauces fertilis hydra novas.  
Quin igitur fortem agnoscis dominumque paremque,  
Tendisti victas cui semel icta manus?  
Erratum, mihi crede, satis, sape, teque repurga  
Aut Lerna impurae te sacra flamma manet.

I translated the Latin text by referring to the partial translation of Saxl 282, but received some help for my English translation from Dr. Joseph A. Munitiz, S.J. Of course, the responsibility for the wording is my own. The Latin transcription is also in Trudzinski 105.

<sup>109</sup> See Chapter 2.

pay little attention to it, to the detriment of their interpretation. Saxl points out that “the woodcut was not really a pro-Luther cartoon but was aimed at the reform of the Church by itself.”<sup>110</sup> His interpretation is not entirely satisfactory, because Saxl mistranslated the original Latin “Germanum Alcidem” into “the German son of Alcaeus, the monster-killer,” although the phrase should be “German Alcides [Hercules].”<sup>111</sup> This misunderstanding is not slight since it misses the adversarial relationship between Hercules and Hydra.

The woodcut and epigram suggest ambivalent feelings about both Luther and Erasmus: the broadsheet woodcut partly expresses the two leading thinkers’ empathy with the Reformation, but it indicates, at the same time, their different methodology for the reform of the Roman Catholic Church. It would be obvious from the woodcut that the enemies of Luther are the Scholastics, “the rabid dogs,” “the insane sophists,” such as Occam and St. Thomas Aquinas. While the two reforming figures were adversaries on some points, they shared the same hatred for Scholasticism. Many Humanists and Reformers including Erasmus and Luther, with some exceptions like Aristotelian Pietro Pomponazzi, advocated anti-Scholasticism.<sup>112</sup> For example, Lorenzo Valla, Italian Humanist, expressed “distaste for scholastic arguments” and criticised “the ‘barbaric’

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<sup>110</sup> Saxl 282.

<sup>111</sup> Saxl 282.

<sup>112</sup> On anti-Scholasticism and anti-Aristotelianism in the Renaissance, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, “Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance,” *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains*, new ed., Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961) 92-119; Charles B. Schmitt and Brian P. Copenhaver, *Renaissance Philosophy, A History of Western Philosophy* 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) 29: “Throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, condemnation of scholastic university education was the ceaseless hue and cry of the humanists.” See also Charles Garfield Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, New Approaches to European History 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 124-62; Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation*, Harvard Historical Studies 120 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). McConica tersely summarises the background of Scholasticism in his *Erasmus* 50-51. Thomas More also shared anti-Scholasticism with his friend Erasmus: see Warren W. Wooden, “Anti-Scholastic Satire in Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia*,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8.2 (1977) 29-45.

terminology of the scholastic philosophers.”<sup>113</sup> Erasmus also condemns the sophistry of Scholastic theologians in *The Praise of Folly*:

These subtle refinements of subtleties are made still more subtle by all the different lines of scholastic argument, so that you’d extricate yourself faster from a labyrinth than from the tortuous obscurities of realists, nominalists, Thomists, Albertists, Ockhamists, and Scotists—and I’ve not mentioned all the sects, only the main ones.<sup>114</sup>

That both Erasmus and Luther criticise Scholasticism is shown in the same names: Occam, Aquinas, and Scotus.<sup>115</sup>

The tone of Erasmus’ anti-Scholasticism is the same as that of Italian Humanists like Valla. Erasmus discovered a manuscript of Valla’s annotated edition of the New Testament, *Collatio novi testamenti*, in an abbey near Louvain in 1504 and used it when writing his *Novum instrumentum* (New Testament) which included the Greek text, the revised Latin text of the Vulgate, and annotations.<sup>116</sup> Luther used this *Novum instrumentum* of Erasmus as a source text when he translated the New Testament into German. The shared anti-Scholastic outlook among Humanists and Reformers can be

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<sup>113</sup> Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* 24, 34; Peter Mack, *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic*, Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History 43 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993) 15; Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380-1620*, Oxford-Warburg Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 48-49. See, for example, Laurentius Valla, *Opera omnia*, ed. Eugenio Garin, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Torino: Bottega d’Erasmio, 1962) 708 (bk. 2, ch. 11); Lorenzo Valla, *Dialectical Disputations*, trans. Brian P. Copenhaver and Lodi Nauta, eds. Brian P. Copenhaver and Lodi Nauta, *The I Tatti Renaissance library* 50, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012) 85 (2.11.5): “Now what is the point of this huge muddle of negations, a pile so worthless and barbarous?”

<sup>114</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice, ed. A. H. T. Levi, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 27 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) 127.

<sup>115</sup> Erasmus criticises Scholasticism in another place. See Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 993-1121* 112: “The world is burdened with ordinances made by man. It is burdened with the opinions and the dogmas of the Schools.”

<sup>116</sup> Rudolf Wackernagel, *Humanismus und Reformation in Basel* (Basel: Berlag von Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1924) 222; Louis Bouyer, “Erasmus in Relation to the Medieval Biblical Tradition,” *The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Fathers to the Reformation*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe, vol. 2, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 494-95; Albert Rabil, Jr., *Erasmus and the New Testament: The Mind of a Christian Humanist* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1972) 58-61; Erika Rummel, *Erasmus’ “Annotations” on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian*, *Erasmus Studies* 8 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) 13-15; McConica, *Erasmus* 30-31, 37-38.

shown by these translations and annotations.<sup>117</sup>

The woodcut and epigram allude to the following three points: satire against Luther's fiery temper, religious innovation in Europe, and anti-Scholasticism among Humanists and Reformers. Nevertheless, the interpretation is not as obvious as it may appear, because Holbein did not independently engrave the woodcut of Luther; Erasmus seems to have encouraged him to produce it. Aby Warburg states: "polemical image that satirizes both Luther and his adversaries is the woodcut Hercules Germanicus, attributed to Hans Holbein, and said to have been devised by Erasmus."<sup>118</sup> As we saw in Chapter 1, Holbein caricatured the Hydra-headed foolish people in the margin of Erasmus' copy of *The Praise of Folly* published at Basle in 1515, and the marginal illustration represented the fusion of the fickle multitude and the capricious Goddess Fortune on a sphere. Holbein had been inseparably bound up with Erasmus as he produced some portraits of Erasmus; retracing Erasmus' steps would make it possible to reveal their personal relationships. Erasmus left his native country, Holland, and wandered around Europe during his lifetime, but he made the longest stay at the Froben press in Basle; and it was probably by the Froben press that the woodcut "Hercules Germanicus" was printed.<sup>119</sup> Whether this is the case or not, it is

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<sup>117</sup> On Luther's anti-Scholastic attitude, see, for instance, Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald, eds. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann, American ed., *Luther's Works*, vol. 25, 55 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1972) 361: "I have been worn out by these studies for many years now, and having experienced and heard many things over and over again, I have come to see that it is the study of vanity and perdition." See also Erika Rummel, *The Case against Johann Reuchlin: Religious and Social Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 28. For the relationship between Luther and Humanism, see Lewis W. Spitz, "Humanism in Germany," *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe*, eds. Anthony Goodman and Angus MacKay (London: Longman, 1990) 202-19; James Overfield, "Germany," *The Renaissance in National Context*, eds. Roy Porter and Mikulás Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 92-122.

<sup>118</sup> Warburg, "Pagan-Antique Prophecy" 767; Warburg, "Heidnisch-antike Weissagung" 653. See also Bruno Weber, "Martin Luther als Hercules Germanicus 1522," *Zentralbibliothek Zürich: Schatzkammer der Überlieferung*, eds. Alfred Cattani and Bruno Weber (Zurich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 1989) 39-41, 156-57; Petra Roettig, "Hercules Germanicus: Luthers Läuterung zum Nationaldenkmal," *Deutsche Nationaldenkmale 1790-1990*, eds. Gert Mattenklott, Gerald Funk, Matthias Pötzsch, Peter Schuster and Nordrhein-Westfalen Kultursekretariat (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 1993) 48-59.

<sup>119</sup> See Burckhardt-Werthemann 33. For the relationship between the Froben press and Erasmus, see



clear that Hercules and Hydra had special meanings for both Erasmus and Holbein.

Holbein depicted both Erasmus and Luther as Herculean. This means inevitably that, if one is compared to Hercules, the other is Hydra as his enemy. Erasmus and Luther had the aim of reforming the Roman Catholic Church, but had different opinions on methods for advancing this, as suggested in the latter half of the epigram:

Do you not therefore recognise your strong Lord and equal, to whom you once before stretched out your hands [in supplication] when smitten? Believe me, having made enough error, be wise, and reform yourself, or the accursed flames of impure Lerna await you.<sup>120</sup>

The meaning is not quite clear, but it at least implies here that Luther is both a comrade and an enemy. The “error” referred to were committed by Luther, and Erasmus and Holbein advise Luther to “be wise” and “reform” himself. In addition, the epigram warns Luther that “the accursed flames of impure Lerna await you” if he does not “reform” himself. As we know, the “impure Lerna” is the Hydra’s habitat. Hydra here may be the Roman Hydra or Scholasticism as a formidable adversary. However, it is true that Luther was

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Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993) 23-24, 180-87. Not only the circumstantial evidence of the publication but also a process of the religious controversy on free will between Erasmus and Luther would elucidate its hidden meanings of the woodcut. Erasmus’ *De libero arbitrio* was published in 1524 and Luther’s *De servo arbitrio* (*On the Bondage of the Will*) was published in 1525. Since it was in 1522 that Holbein depicted Luther as “Hercules Germanicus,” Holbein might not have known the controversy on free will and salvation between Erasmus and Luther. However, it is reasonable that we think Holbein probably knew the controversy in 1522 because Erasmus’ *De libero arbitrio* was written to refute Luther’s *Assertio Omnium Articulorum M. Lutheri per Bullam Leonis X. Novissimam Damnatorum* (*Assertions on All the Articles of Martin Luther Recently Condemned by the Bull of Leo X*) in 1520, and the point of refutation was on Luther’s view of free will especially in article 36. Macardle, Miller and Trinkaus, eds., Introduction xxxix-xxvii and n90; and Introductory Note by Clarence H. Miller in Martin Luther, *An Assertion of All the Articles of Martin Luther Which Were Quite Recently Condemned by a Bull of Leo X, Article 36, Assertio omnium articulorum Martini Lutheri per bullam Leonis X novissimam damnatorum, articulus 36*, trans. Clarence H. Miller, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 76 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 300; the Luther’s text is translated in 301-10. The Latin text is in Martin Luther, “Assertio omnium articulorum Martini Lutheri per bullam Leonis X novissimam damnatorum, articulus 36,” *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 7 (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883) 142-49. On the Papal Bull, see also, Gerhard O. Forde, *The Captivation of the Will: Luther vs. Erasmus on Freedom and Bondage*, ed. Steven D. Paulson, *Lutheran Quarterly Books* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005) 25; Rupp 13.

<sup>120</sup> See the note of 108.

portrayed as a Hydra-headed monster in the Cochlaeus' woodcut, and became Erasmus' strong antagonist in the heated debate about free will. These facts suggest that for Catholics Luther is a Hydra if Erasmus is a Hercules. Erasmus himself compares Luther's party to a Hydra in a letter to Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio in 1524:

I find I now experience just what in ancient mythology is said to have happened as a rule to Hercules, . . . I am wrestling here with the many-headed hydra which is Luther's party. . . . To fight with the hydra was a large enough assignment in itself."<sup>121</sup>

Herculean Erasmus is fighting with Luther's party representing the many-headed Hydra.

The word "party" probably implies the formidableness and rapid spread of Protestantism.

At the end of this chapter, let us summarise the discussion so far. Images of Hercules and Hydra epitomise some philosophical or theological interests of Renaissance intellectuals such as Erasmus and Luther, and can help to clarify the important topics in which they were interested—free will, self, and identity—topics that were not in marginal area but at the centre of the Renaissance ethos.

The Humanists such as Erasmus, Pico, and Vives praised of human being positively by using the images of Hydra, Proteus, chameleon, and polyp, but the Reformers, such as Luther and Calvin, and the English anti-theatrical polemicists, such as William Perkins, Stephen Gosson, and William Prynne denied the positive potential of self-adaptability. Our discussion so far would make it possible to say that the conflict between the Humanists and Reformers over acting is reflected in the negative and positive reaction to acting. Negatively the Reformers who believed in predetermination loathed the theatricality of human beings.

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<sup>121</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1356-1534 (1523-1524)*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors and Alexander Dalzell, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 155-56.

However, positively, in Elizabethan England, an actor was compared to a chameleon and to Proteus. Edward Alleyn, who created the roles of Tamburlaine and Faustus, was admirably remembered by Thomas Heywood as a “Proteus for shapes” in his prologue to Marlow’s *Jew of Malta*.<sup>122</sup> Richard Burbage, the leading player of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men—who first created the role of Richard III, as well as those of Hamlet, Othello, and Lear—was remembered by Richard Flecknoe as:

A delightful Proteus, so wholly transforming himself into his Part, and putting off himself with his Cloathes, as he never (not so much as in the Tying-house) assum’d himself again until the Play was done.<sup>123</sup>

Moreover, the facts that the Humanists praised the changeability of man are indicated in the biography of Thomas More; the theatricality of More is seen in extant descriptions of his splendid extemporaneous performances. William Roper, who married More’s daughter, recalls that as a boy in Morton’s household More distinguished himself as an actor:

Though he [More] was young of years, yet would he at Christmas-tide suddenly sometimes step in among the players, and never studying for the matter, make a part of his own there presently among them, which made the lookers-on more sport than all the players beside.<sup>124</sup>

Erasmus also writes about More’s improvisatory character in the prefatory letter to his friend in *The Praise of Folly*:

[T]hough your extraordinarily keen intelligence places you worlds apart from the common herd, still the incredible sweetness and gentleness of your

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<sup>122</sup> Christopher Marlowe, *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. C.F. Tucker Brooke, rep. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953) 239. See also, J. Payne Collier, *Memoirs of Edward Alleyn, Founder of Dulwich College: Including Some New Particulars Respecting Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Marston, Dekker, &c* (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1841) 9; William A. Armstrong, “Shakespeare and the Acting of Edward Alleyn,” *Shakespeare Survey* 7 (1954) 84; M. C. Bradbrook, *The Rise of the Common Player: A Study of Actor and Society in Shakespeare’s England* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962) 127.

<sup>123</sup> E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923) 4.370.

<sup>124</sup> William Roper, “The Life of Sir Thomas More,” *Two Early Tudor Lives*, eds. Richard S. Sylvester and Davis P. Harding (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962) 198. See also, Greenblatt, “At the Table of the Great” 11-73.

character makes you able and willing to be a man for all seasons with all men.<sup>125</sup>

The glorification of chameleon-like human being by Pico and Vives, the protean great actors, and the extemporariness of More have the praise for “change” in the Renaissance in common.

At the beginning of this chapter, we elucidated the phrase, Prince Hal’s “Hydra-headed wilfulness,” by the Archbishop of Canterbury in *Henry V* and the transformation of Coriolanus from Hercules to Hydra; and we understood that “Hydra-headed” Prince Hal who finally betrays Falstaff at the end of the play is an outstanding actor—a perfect example of an actor-politician. The material discussed and decoded in the chapter has been used to shed light on the extensive and differently inflected uses of Hercules and Hydra. We can see, now, that the theatrically changing identity of Prince Hal was a target to be subdued by Hercules for the Archbishop of Canterbury. In this scene the Archbishop praises Hal who has rid himself of his Hydra-like vicious self. Moreover, we also saw Richard’s soliloquy at the beginning of this chapter:

Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,  
And cry “Content” to that which grieves my heart,  
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,  
And frame my face to all occasions.

.....  
I can add colours to the *chameleon*,  
Change shapes with *Proteus* for advantages,  
And set the murderous *Machiavel* to school.  
Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?

(3 *Henry VI*, 3.3.182-94: emphasis added)

In order to “get a crown” Machiavellian Richard could vary his face and language, suit the occasion like “chameleon” and “[c]hange shapes” like “Proteus”; but Coriolanus could not

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<sup>125</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) 2.

politically use the right word in the right place. In sum, Coriolanus' tragedy also can be explained by the Hydra representation as follows. If Coriolanus who has "*grown from man to dragon*" (5.4.13) had transformed himself completely from Hercules to Hydra in the play, he, like Prince Hal and Richard, could have been a formidable adversary of Rome as a crafty actor-politician in the end. However, Coriolanus was too fixed in his own belief to transform himself appropriately into an artful many-headed Hydra with flexible tongues. Coriolanus should have become a wily Machiavellian actor-politician like Prince Hal and Richard who had chameleonic characteristics and Protean faces. Coriolanus' incomplete transformation into a Hydra is responsible for and hastens his death even if Hydra was destined to be disposed of by Hercules in mythology. Luther used his various faces for strategic purposes. On the other hand, Coriolanus was too inflexible to adapt himself to changing circumstances. Many-headed Hydra symbolised a multiple personality or changing identity in the Renaissance, and the representations of Hydra, chameleon, Proteus, and polyp reflected, at the same time, the religious controversy on free will between the Reformers and Humanists. The differences of attitude towards the concept of "change" were indicated in the theological differences between them; and the complicated reflection was expressed in the multilayeredly ironical woodcuts and their texts, as we have seen.

## Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to investigate the mythical hero, Hercules, and his enemy, the many-headed Hydra in Shakespeare's Roman history play, *Coriolanus*; and by this investigation, we have hoped to clarify the meaning which Shakespeare manifestly or latently sought to demonstrate in this work bearing in mind its Renaissance context. Why is Coriolanus compared to "Hercules" (4.6.104), and why are the Roman plebeians likened to "the many-headed multitude" like a "Hydra" (2.3.16-17; 3.1.96)? Are the answers simply because Coriolanus is heroic and powerful like Hercules, and do the plebeians constantly change their opinions like Hydra with its multiple regenerative heads? These simple questions were our starting point for this thesis which has tried to refute these simple answers and find deeper and more profound meaning or implications based upon European Renaissance Humanistic thought.

Since Herculean myths are wide-ranging, this study focused upon mainly the connection between Hercules and Hydra because our discussion would have become out of hand if we had dealt with all uses of the word "Hercules" by Shakespeare. To pay attention to the representations of Hercules and Hydra is to analyse the relationship between rulers and subjects, which is a pivotal theme in Shakespeare's plays; and *Coriolanus* brought the political Hercules-Hydra issues to a conclusion in Shakespeare's long career. Moreover, the representation of Hydra in *Coriolanus* is noteworthy because the monster does not appear anywhere in the sources Shakespeare used to write the play. The shallow and fickle Hydra-headed multitude first appeared in Jack Cade's Rebellion of 2 *Henry VI*

and continued through the English Histories, *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet* to *Coriolanus*.

All these also had their own rebellious crowd scenes, though, for reasons of focus, we did not undertake the analysis of the scenes. *Coriolanus* was Shakespeare's final comment on the issue of the many-headed multitude, and a turning point in his work because after *Coriolanus* Shakespeare concentrated only on the so-called late romances: *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest* in his plays.

The significance of Hercules and Hydra, which revived in the Renaissance after their long sleep during the Middle Ages, has been neglected by Shakespeareans. It is probably because the dyad has been regarded as a cliché for their famous symbolism; this attitude is clearly shown by the fact that systematic and comprehensive studies on Hercules in Shakespeare's works have not advanced in proportion to its importance since Eugene M. Waith's *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare, and Dryden* in 1962. Many editions of *Coriolanus*, all of which are academically excellent, have not noticed the significance of the hero and the many-headed monster. *Coriolanus* is a play about how the Herculean Roman General tames the Hydra-headed multitude. The simplicity of this confrontation seems to have prevented scholars from examining the Hercules-Hydra representations more closely.

There are two motives that made me write this thesis. One was found in John Florio's English translation of Montaigne's *Essays* in which Florio translated Montaigne's simple phrase "cette tourbe esmeuë (the enraged rabble)" into "this incensed *Hydra-headed-monster* multitude (emphasis added)": Why did Florio add the adjective "Hydra-headed-monster" to "the multitude"? The other was shown in the illustration of the multitude represented as a many-headed monster standing with a stick on a sphere

wafting over the water which Hans Holbein the Younger inserted in margins of a copy of Erasmus' *Moriae encomium* (*The Praise of Folly*) published at Basle in 1515. Why did Holbein draw the multitude as such a bizarre image? These questions were a trigger and driving force for us to carry on research; and to answer the two questions and also explore the deeper meaning of the expression "*Hydra-headed-monster* multitude" were the aim of this study.

As Chapter 1 proved, the expression, "many-headed multitude" or "Hydra-headed multitude" was used because Renaissance thinkers and painters such as Erasmus, Agrippa, and Holbein rediscovered and reintroduced views of the many-headed multitude by ancient philosophers and poets such as Plato and Horace. The expression was a product of the European intellectual tradition from the classical Greek and Roman philosophers to the Renaissance writers, and in England Philip Sidney played a crucial role in spreading the phrase. Holbein's weird drawing and the title page of John Dee's book can be attributed to this Humanistic view of the multitude, and the many-headed representations are a compound of the goddess Fortune and many-faced Mercury which symbolise shallowness and fickleness. Not only in the literary world but also in the actual Elizabethan and Jacobean world, the capricious multitude could raise violent rebellion, and consequently the people experienced an unstable society. *Coriolanus* draws on both the Humanistic literary tradition and the lessons of actual social disturbances.

Coriolanus, in the end, was banished by this whimsical many-headed multitude from Rome and killed by them. Why had Herculean Coriolanus to be banished and killed by the Hydra-headed multitude? Was it for his Herculean characteristics that tragedy fell upon



Coriolanus? Chapters 2 to 5 were allocated to answer the questions and explore what the Herculean characteristics were.

Here, we would like to summarise the argument and identify the three reasons for Coriolanus' tragic end. The first reason is on "eloquence." When Volumnia, Coriolanus' mother, tries to persuade her son, who is running for consul, to court the Roman plebeians' favour, she says:

I prithee now, my son,  
*[She takes his bonnet]*  
Go to them with this bonnet in thy hand,  
And thus far having stretched it—here be with them—  
Thy knee bussing the stones—for in such business  
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th' ignorant  
More learned than the ears— (3.2.72-77)

Volumnia understands that politicians need to flatter and appease the multitude, and that to bow modestly is an effective way to win their consent. While she calls, "the eyes of th' ignorant / More learned than the ears," she is mistaken. If Coriolanus is a Hercules, he should have been eloquent, and Volumnia should have emphasised the importance of "the ears" rather than "the eyes of th' ignorant." Due to his mother's bad advice, Coriolanus cannot please the multitude by gestures ("Action") and deliver a speech full of "eloquence" and persuasion.

The second reason for his tragedy is related to "virtue," an attribute of Hercules and a significant concept of the Renaissance. Aufidius summarises Coriolanus' road to perdition: "First he was / A noble servant to them [Romans], but could not / Carry his honours even. . . . [P]ride, . . . defect of judgement, . . . nature, / Not to be other than one thing, . . . made him feared, / So hated, and so banished" (4.7.35-48). And Aufidius adds the sentence:

So our virtues / Lie in th' interpretation of the time. (4.7.49-50)

This line is extremely suggestive and goes straight to the heart of the play. First Citizen, at the beginning of the play, pointed out that Coriolanus' pride "is even to the altitude of his *virtue*" (1.1.38: emphasis added), and Cominius described Coriolanus' "valour" as his "chiefest virtue" (2.2.84). In a play written in the age of the Renaissance, the concept of "virtue" could include Machiavellian *realpolitik* "*virtù*." However, Coriolanus' "virtue," based upon only "pride" and "valour," is an outmoded concept. The Machiavellian Aufidius who could vary his face to suit his needs understood the conceptual change from "virtue" to "*virtù*." If Coriolanus is Herculean, he should have become "virtuous," but he was unable to so. Hence another reason for his tragedy.

"[O]ur virtues / Lie in th' interpretation of the time": a concept depends on the time in which it is shaped and used. *Coriolanus*, a play about the Roman Republic, was written during the English Renaissance, an age of upheavals. The invention of the printing press made it possible to transmit rapidly new ideas and concepts all over Europe. They permeated into local culture, and influenced by it and adapted likewise, as is shown in *Coriolanus*. The play, for example, reflects the notional change of "virtue" in the Renaissance, as study of the Hercules-Hydra representations shows. Looking at the play through the prism of the representations, we can find some insights into the play which Shakespearians have not noticed.

The Herculean representations in the play also show traces of fictional and factual sources. Many monarchs in the European Renaissance compared themselves to Hercules, and took the "virtuous" and "eloquent" Hercules as their model. The word "virtue" took on a more political connotation in the Renaissance due to the influence of Machiavelli.

The eloquent Hercules is also based upon the discourse of the European Renaissance Humanists such as Petrarch and Erasmus who translated Lucian's tale of the Gallic Hercules into Latin. Hercules was frequently associated with a virtuous and eloquent king, so that by tracing the use of the Hercules legend at this time one can shed light on the political culture of the European Renaissance.

While the Herculean self-image of European rulers was characterised by "virtue" and "eloquence," we should not forget that Shakespeare transformed Coriolanus from a Hercules into a furious dragon, implying a Hydra. Just as Hydra changed its appearance every time Hercules cut off the heads, Shakespeare's Prince Hal and Richard of Gloucester, Machiavellian actor-politicians, could flexibly change themselves. By investigating the "Hydra-headed" self in the Reformation and the Renaissance, we could also understand that the representation epitomised the problem of "free will." If Coriolanus had "*grown from man to dragon*" (5.4.13), and thereby, had transformed himself completely from Hercules to Hydra in the play, he might have been a formidable enemy to Rome. Coriolanus—like Hal and Richard who represent wily, chameleonic, Protean actor-politicians with many faces—could have tactically controlled himself and the Roman multitude. However, Coriolanus was too obstinate to become a redoubtable many-headed Hydra which jeopardised Rome: Shakespeare may imply that Coriolanus' incomplete transformation into a Hydra, a creature destined to be killed by Hercules, foretells Coriolanus' death and seals his fate. This is the third reason for his tragedy. At the beginning of this study, we asked the following question: "Why did Shakespeare use the Hercules-Hydra imagery?" The answer is that it is linked and likened directly with the play's central theme—Coriolanus' death and the confrontation of Coriolanus and the multitude.

At the end of the thesis, I would like to explain the methodology of this research and its original contribution to knowledge. This study does not depend on a particular literary theory, but it is affected especially by the methodology of the history of ideas and the work of the Warburg School and its iconology which is “the study and interpretation of historical processes through visual images.”<sup>1</sup> Rare and precious primary sources at the Warburg Institute Library and Photographic Collection helped me to trace the reception of the Hercules-Hydra images from the ancient up to the early seventeenth century in France, German, Spain, and mainly England. Libraries in the United Kingdom usually and obviously have books mainly written in English, but the Warburg Institute Library accumulates books written in various European languages and photos taken in various places of Europe. This study shows that information from Greek, Latin, French, German, Italian, and Spanish books, articles, pictures, and engravings adds to more understanding of Hercules and Hydra in *Coriolanus*. In order to examine the European Renaissance, the literature not only in English but also in European languages except English is essential. However, if my linguistic ability to read European languages had been much higher, this thesis could have proved much more fruitful. Improving my skills in reading and writing European languages, of course, including English is needed for further study.

Separate research on Hercules, Hydra, “eloquence,” “virtue,” “free will” and “the flexibility of the self” have been carried out to examine each image and concept, but the research on the Hercules-Hydra dyad which represents these significant concepts in the context of the European Renaissance and Reformation has not been sufficiently conducted. Shakespeareans have not noticed that the representations can become powerful tools to

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Roskill, *The Interpretation of Pictures* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989) 96.

analyse *Coriolanus* and identify the reasons for Coriolanus's tragic end. These are our findings in this thesis.

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